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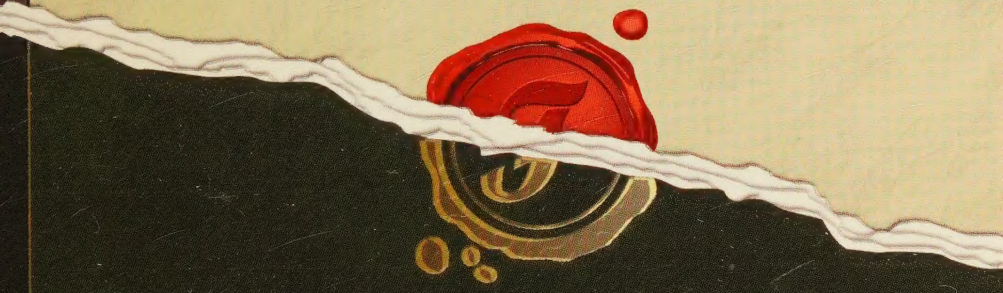

by
Elizabeth Missing Sewell

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F

BIOGRAPHY

OF

ELIZABETH M. SEWELL

COMPILED BY HER

NIECE

ELEANOR L[illegible]

[illegible]

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK AND CALCUTTA

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ELIZABETH M. SEWELL

EDITED BY HER NIECE

ELEANOR L. SEWELL

WITH PORTRAIT

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA
1907

PREFACE.

I HAVE been entrusted by my aunt, Miss Elizabeth Sewell, with her autobiography, and feel that I am carrying out her wishes in having it published, so that many to whom the record of her life will be of interest may have it in her own words. Some of my friends have urged me to add to this record further extracts from her journal, so I have inserted them with the chapters in the autobiography, to correspond as nearly as possible with regard to dates. Any account of her life would be incomplete without some notice of her educational and literary work, and of the deep interest she manifested in all schemes for women's welfare; therefore a few additions will be found at the end of the book. The following have kindly contributed papers on these subjects: Miss H. J. Harvey, who was

long associated with Miss Sewell in the working of St. Boniface School; Mrs. Reginald Clayton, who rendered her valuable service in some of her literary work; Miss Kate Whitehead, one of Miss Sewell's former pupils, who adds a paper on the latter years of her life; and the Rev. Canon Feilden, one of her oldest Bonchurch friends, who concludes with a few touching words upon her last days. To one and all of these, and to Mr. A. Llewelyn Roberts for his assistance whilst the work was passing through the press, I owe a debt of gratitude.

I cannot close these few words without alluding to the memorial which has been raised to my aunt by very many of her special friends, pupils, and others who only knew her through her writings. The form the memorial has taken touches me too deeply and personally to allow me to say more about it, than that, if she could know, as perhaps she may, of the way in which their regard and affection have been shown, she would gratefully appreciate their action. That her blessing is resting on it is my firm conviction.

ELEANOR L. SEWELL.

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INTRODUCTION.

ELIZABETH MISSING SEWELL was one of a family of twelve children, seven sons and five daughters, and a descendant of one of the Westmoreland lairds who had the

ERRATUM.

Page 1, line 4 of Introduction, *for* Westmorland Lairds *read* Cumberland Yeomen.

residence in Oxford for so many years of his life rendered him unfit for parish work, and his ignorance of the ways of the world, combined with college habits, not only rendered him a prey to imposition of every kind but reduced him in a very few years to a comparatively indigent state.

Her maternal grandfather, Mr. Edwards,

was also a clergyman and belonged to Pembroke College, Oxford; for some years he was chaplain on board the *Centaur*, man-of-war, and subsequently perpetual curate of Newport in the Isle of Wight.

Her parents, Thomas Sewell and Jane Edwards, were married in Newport Church, Isle of Wight, on 29th March, 1802. They took a ready-furnished house in Crocker Street, Newport, one which, as described by Mrs. Sewell in the account which she had begun of her early life, "in those days was thought quite the residence of a gentleman, but which now would be thought very different indeed. It was called Shrewsbury House, from the circumstance of the first occupier being the mess of a regiment sent to Newport, No. 86." In this house they remained several years; their establishment was small but sufficient for their needs. Manners and customs were in those days very different from what they are now, and society in the town of Newport was very limited; few, if any, dinner parties were given, but card parties, with tea and coffee and large suppers later in the evening, were very frequent. In these

they joined, not feeling it right to enter into more expensive pleasures.

Children were born to them in quick succession; one daughter lived but a brief span, and a son died in his twentieth year. In 1807, shortly before the birth of their fourth son, Henry, they moved into another house in Crocker Street, to which they added a new dining-room, large and commodious, looking into St. Cross Grove. Their second son, William, who was born on the 23rd January, 1804, was the founder of Radley College, and the sixth son, James Edwards, held the post of Warden of New College, Oxford, for forty-three years, and that of Vice-Chancellor of the University for four years, from 1874 to 1878. The four surviving girls were the youngest members of the family, and the eldest of these, Ellen Mary, was the constant companion and sharer in the joys and sorrows of her sister Elizabeth Missing.

The fact that Elizabeth Sewell passed nearly a complete century within the narrow confines of the Isle of Wight accounts for the mere glimpses which she gives us of some of the great minds of the middle of the nineteenth

century, for it prevented her from mixing in literary society. To the world this is no small loss, for the pages of her autobiography show a grasp of character and an occasional flash of humour which would have made anything she had written of the literary world of her day worth reading.

The brunt of many years of trouble fell mainly upon her shoulders, but though through the story of her life there rings a tone of sadness there also sounds a note of courage, whence issued a life's accomplishment which does not always fall to the lot of others equally equipped but more happily placed. The story of her youth, as she tells it, is both instructive and interesting, and we are left with a wish that she had been less reticent of her career as a teacher, in which her braveness, keen observation, and common-sense enabled her to do such fruitful work.

A. LL. R.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

Ascension Day, 1st June, 1848.

YESTERDAY fortnight, as Ellen[1] and I were talking to my dearest mother in the full knowledge that, humanly speaking, her life could not be prolonged many days, probably not many hours, she mentioned, as one of her last wishes and requests, that I would try and finish an account she had begun of her early life, and other family circumstances of interest.

Of course I gave the promise, though I felt at the time it would be very difficult to keep it. The history of a family, told by one of its members, must, in a certain degree, resolve itself into the history of the person who writes. This must especially be the case now, because, as nearly the youngest of twelve children, my recollections cannot go back very far to the childhood of the others. I can only state what I have heard, and relate my own impressions; and a great part of the circumstances, which would have been important in my dear mother's eyes, passed before I

[1] Elizabeth Missing Sewell's sister and constant companion.

could understand them. Still I would try to do my best, because I have promised, and, moreover, I have often felt that many things in one's life were worth recording. We have all as a family been singularly cared for, and, on looking back, I can trace the most clear working of God's Providence for our good, both as regards myself and others. It seems as if I could see the meaning of almost every joy and every sorrow.

I can just recollect dimly what was quite my infancy at home. My father had removed to a larger and more convenient house in the High Street (Newport, Isle of Wight), before I was born. It adjoined Mr. James Clarke's, and had a garden stretching back into Lugley Street. Our nursery was at the top of the house, and commanded a bright view for a town, as we could see beyond our garden to the hill on which the buildings of Parkhurst Barracks now stand. We had a very kind though rather rough-mannered nurse (Sally Pond), who was devoted to us. I was very small for my age—my brothers used to call me Blighted Betty—and Sally taught me my letters by putting me upon a little chair on the table whilst she washed up the tea things. I can remember also a very early religious *taste*—I really cannot call it more, for it certainly did not influence my life, as I gave way to a very violent temper, and was extremely self-willed. (My mother used to say she had had the three Furies in her family—William, Emma, and myself.) But in feeling I was always open to religious impressions, and would lie in my cot, whilst the nurse

was preparing to dress us, and say little prayers and hymns to myself, with a certain sense of comfort and trust.

We were all sent to school very early. It was a day school, but there were also a very few boarders. The school was kept by a Miss Crooke, a friend of my mother's, and the daughter of a post-captain in the navy. Ellen went when she was only three years and a half old. I and my two younger sisters waited till we were four.

Miss Crooke had a very independent mind, and was very clever naturally, though she could never have had much education. In temper she was hasty and capricious; her disposition was generous; but she was not particularly refined. Independence of spirit led her to set the world and its opinions at defiance. She insisted upon certain strict rules of dress, such as not wearing coloured sashes, or lace, or embroidery, and having the hair cut close like boys. She was a Radical in politics, and I have heard of her standing at an open window wearing a bright blue bow on the day of a violently contested election when the town was in an uproar about the Reform Bill; but she was an absolute despot in her own person, and when urged beyond her patience to break her rules, she was heard one day to exclaim, "Not if the King of England himself were to ask me!" Still she had very noble qualities, strong religious principles, and a love of truth carried even to an extreme. She was unfitted to manage any but very young children, to

whom she would sometimes show tenderness, and in after years we suffered much from her peculiarities; but we were too much afraid of her to complain of anything we did not like, and my dear mother never knew, until we were grown up and had left the school, all we endured there.

The contrast between school and home was very great. Home was a paradise of freedom. My mother insisted indeed upon implicit and instantaneous obedience, but she never fretted us, and she entered into all our amusements. There was much variety in our life from the number of persons, connected with my father's business,[1] who came to the house. I can understand now what a charm my mother's ease of manner and exceeding kindness of heart were to every one. She must have been naturally very clever; for, although she had received little or no education, her knowledge of books, and her memory for poetry and apt quotations, were quite remarkable. She often talked to us of her studies as a girl; how she used not only to devour novels, and read Sir Charles Grandison every winter, but how she also taught herself a little French, learned by heart long passages from the great poets, sometimes read history, and especially delighted in Bayley's Dictionary, with its long meanings and rules for pronunciation. The greater part of what may be termed her education was gained, I imagine, from constant intercourse with my father and the young men articled to my great-uncle, Richard

[1] Solicitor's.

Clarke, who was himself a man of literary tastes, and assisted Sir Richard Worsley in writing his *History of the Isle of Wight.*

Mr. Clarke was the friend and correspondent of Pennant, the well-known traveller, and of Gilpin, the artist of the New Forest scenery, who gave him several of his drawings. My great-uncle added a manuscript volume to the *History of the Isle of Wight,* which is now in our possession. We have besides a set of Piranesi engravings, which came to us through him, and must have been given to him by Sir Richard Worsley in acknowledgment of literary assistance; also a copy of the *Museum Worsleyanum* —a splendid specimen of printing, engraving, and binding, upon which Sir Richard must have spent a very large sum in his wish to preserve a record of the treasures of ancient sculptures, etc., which he brought from Italy, and which were placed in the saloon at Appuldurcombe Park. But—*sic transit gloria mundi* —Appuldurcombe is now turned into a Boys' School,[1] and Sir Richard Worsley's treasures have passed into the possession of the Pelham family, and many have been removed to their seat, Brocklesby, in Lincolnshire. Sir Richard Worsley had no children, and his niece, Miss Simpson, who inherited a large portion of his property, married Mr. Pelham, afterwards the first Earl of Yarborough. She died before the earldom was bestowed.

[1] It is now (1907) and for some years past has been the home of a Community of exiled French Benedictine Monks.

A slight connection through the Burleighs of the New Forest existed between my mother's family—the Clarkes, and the Worsleys of Stenbury—a younger branch of the Appuldurcombe Worsleys. It was just sufficient to induce us to go into mourning for one another. So far as I have been able to make out, Mary Worsley, daughter of Mr. David Worsley of Stenbury, married a Colonel Burleigh; and Colonel Burleigh's sister married Mr. Robert Clarke, father of Mr. Richard Clarke.

At any rate the connection was amusingly recognised (so my mother used to tell us) at the time that Sir Richard Worsley—the great man of the Isle of Wight, to whom every one bowed down—was engaged in writing the *History of the Island.* When Uncle Richard Clarke was in Sir Richard's good graces he was addressed as "my dear cousin," but if a difference arose, it was "my dear Mr. Clarke".

But to return to my own story. The young men articled to Mr. Richard Clarke took an interest in books, and would lay bets about certain passages in classical and noted modern authors; and this led to discussions, from which my mother doubtless gained a good deal of varied information. Yet it is incomprehensible to me how she could have become what she was, for she was exposed to great temptations. She was very pretty, and there was a great deal of flirting with the officers who were at that time stationed at the barracks; and I believe she might have been married many times before she finally accepted

my father. I remember her telling us of her laughing girlish impertinence towards an old French gentleman, one of the emigrants of the First Revolution. He was joking with her, I imagine, and she insisted upon his telling her whether he would not like to marry her. He looked at her, and replied, "Show me a pistol in one hand, and Miss Jane Edwards in the other, and rather than be shot——!" and he shrugged his shoulders, and left her to draw the conclusion. I daresay many more such stories might have been told of her, for her spirits must have been, as a young person, almost uncontrollable, since all the troubles of a life of seventy-six years had not entirely subdued them. I have heard her say that my great-aunt, Mrs. Lydia Clarke, used to prophesy of her that she never could come to any good. She lived to be the support and comfort of the whole family.

CHAPTER II.

SCHOOL LIFE.

My mother had extremely strict notions upon all questions of propriety, yet she could not well have gained them from the state of society at that time, or from the tone of her own family. There was an unfortunate marriage in the case of a near relative, and to avoid meeting the lady, whose reputation was doubtful, or being obliged to entertain her, she gave up for many years all general society. There were dinner parties, but only for gentlemen. Persons of all ranks came to the house, and my mother showed attention to every one, but she managed admirably as to her intimate friends and acquaintances—guarding us from the gossip of a country town. As little girls, we were kept in the background when strangers were present; but my mother devoted her evenings to us, helping us in games, etc.; and when we went to bed she would go upstairs with us and read to us whilst we were being undressed, because she did not like us to run the risk of being frightened by ghost stories told by the nursery-maids, as she had been once frightened herself. I can recall now the

pleasure with which (taking my turn with my sisters) I used to jump up into her lap and listen whilst she read to us *Anson's Voyages*, or *Lemprier's Tour to Morocco*, or the *History of Montezuma*. When she had finished, we all, kneeling around her, said our prayers and went to bed happy.

Our house in the High Street was a very pleasant one. My father added to it from time to time, and took in a large space of pretty garden at the back. My mother, however, could not bear going to it, she was so fond of the house she left, which had a much larger drawing-room. She told me that she cried the first day they took possession of the house in High Street. I was born in this house, 19th February, 1815, and lived in it for seven and twenty years, till my father's death.

My father was a very different person from my mother. He was irritable and cold-mannered, but most benevolent and really tender-hearted. His kindness of disposition was indeed almost a fault, for it led him into imprudence, and he would sometimes do what might be really an injury to his own family, rather than favour them against the interests of others. We were all afraid of him, though he scarcely ever punished us. Yet one of our chief delights, as we grew up, was to ride with him over the farms which, as agent to many landlords, he was accustomed to visit. He scarcely spoke to us, but we trotted or ambled by his side through the island lanes, and were quite satisfied.

When I look back upon those days the style of our education seems strange almost beyond belief. Now, girls, as a rule, are supposed to learn everything, and be made to understand everything. At Miss Crooke's we were taught to read and spell correctly, to write and cipher; we learned Pinnock's Catechisms of History and Geography, and parsed sentences grammatically. For religious instruction we read portions of the Old Testament, and the Gospels, and Acts of the Apostles in a class every day, using Mrs. Trimmer's "Selections"; and on Sundays we repeated the Collect and learned Watts's hymns, besides going through the Church Catechism. We also had Crossman's Catechism given us as an explanation of the Church Catechism; but this Sunday work refers to an after period of our school life. At home we were only expected to repeat the Catechism as we learned it, by very slow degrees; and with a Noah's Ark to amuse us, and the pleasure of dining in the parlour, and looking at the pictures in a large Bible, Sunday was a happy, bright day though the church services were very dreary. In addition to the English lessons at Miss Crooke's, we were taught music and drawing by very indifferent country masters, and had French lessons from a very courteous old gentleman, the Abbé de Grenthe, who had left his country during the First Revolution and set up a school in Newport. He told us half the words in the lesson we were expected to repeat, and translated one word before us as we read to him, so

that we were certain of not making a mistake. We were required to put French into English, but never English into French, and thus had but little difficulty in any way.

This amount of instruction, with the addition of an occasional lesson in the working of problems on the globes, from our chief writing master (the head of the school, which had once been the Abbé de Grenthe's), and, as we grew older, a little very elementary geometry in the holidays from our brother's tutor, was really all the teaching I had till I was thirteen. Now, such limited and mechanical lessons would be scoffed at, yet there was a counter-balancing good. All that we did was done thoroughly. Our short repetitions from Pinnock's Catechisms were made without the smallest hesitation or the change of a single word; and, to this day, my acquaintance with the History of England rests for a foundation upon a remembrance of the particular page in Pinnock in which the events were noted. Then we went over the little books again and again. The Catechism of English History I repeated from the time I was seven or eight years old (I should think) till I left school. Of course the facts were indelibly impressed upon my memory, and without confusion. They were few and far between, but they were landmarks which I have been thankful for ever since.

The strictness of the school discipline was extreme. Not a word was spoken in school time; and

as for disobedience, it never entered our thoughts as a possibility. Three mistakes, however trivial, in a lesson learned by rote, were punished by another lesson. To begin a word twice, or even to hesitate, was reckoned as a mistake; and to secure our attention, we were required to fix our eyes upon Miss Crooke's nose, rather a prominent object, and so far helpful. If we were absent from school even from illness, all the absent-lessons (as we called them) were required of us before we could receive the usual reward—a card or ticket marked "merit" in black letters. A certain number of these were exchanged when gained, for a similar ticket with red letters; and for three of the red we received a golden ticket, "which was a piece of purple or red leather" made into a ticket and marked with gilt letters. Miss Crooke certainly understood the importance of form, and colour, and ceremony in influencing children's minds. The beauty of the golden tickets formed their chief value in our eyes; and although, when we had gained three, we were allowed to exchange them for a half-crown, I really believe no child ever gave them up and received the money instead without considerable regret. These rewards were not very expensive, they were so difficult to obtain. As a rule we could only gain one black ticket in the day, and for that we were required to be perfect in every lesson, and we might for any fault be made to forfeit a ticket. I was at Miss Crooke's from the age of four to thirteen, but I never gained more than one half-

crown, though I was always striving after it; yet the hope was something to work for.

Miss Crooke's great error was that her system was unbending, and applied without consideration to all characters, careless or attentive, conscientious or indifferent. She was most ingenious in inventing punishments, and all fared alike when a rule was broken. So far, no doubt, she was on the whole right, but she had no opening for extenuating circumstances. For accidental, equally with deliberate offences, we were often disgraced by having to stand up in a corner of the schoolroom with some mark of ignominy upon us. A ram's horn (picked up on the Downs), a rod, an old green tassel, and (tradition said) an old shoe were converted into instruments of humiliation by being fastened on the offender's head. The shoe was before my time. I have, however, a vivid recollection of the ram's horn, and also of some brown-paper ass's ears.

Upon one point—truth—Miss Crooke was severe even to a fault. The smallest deceit, the slightest equivocation, was punished by a month's disgrace. During that period no tickets could be gained, however perfectly the lessons might be learned or the rules observed; and if a child told a lie, she was not allowed any reward for three months, and was obliged to stand up in the schoolroom for several hours with a long black gown on, and a piece of red cloth —cut in the shape of a tongue, and on which the word "Liar" was worked in white letters—fastened

round the neck so as to hang down in front. The awe which fell upon the school when Miss Crooke in a solemn voice said, "Put on the Gown and the Liar's tongue," was indescribable. I never had them on but once, and that was for a falsehood which I confessed of my own accord, because I was too miserable to bear the burden of a guilty conscience. I had written in a little memorandum book the letters "O. W." meaning "Old Witch," an epithet which some of us had ventured to apply to Miss Crooke. When the little book was called for (I forget why), I was frightened and threw it away, and then said I had lost it. No mercy was shown me, and the wretchedness of feeling which the punishment caused I shall never forget. It seemed as if I were marked for life, the only one of my family who had ever committed such an offence. I can recollect, though, having deceived before; so I suppose my conscience had not always been so tender.

CHAPTER III.

YOUTHFUL IMPRESSIONS.

I HAVE mentioned previously that I had a very bad temper, and I was also extremely alive to praise or blame; even as a very little girl I liked to *dream* of being noticed. I can remember going to the Newport Fair with my sisters, and watching some dancing on the tight-rope, and then coming home and fastening a string from one post of a summer-house to another, and moving along it as far as I could without danger, whilst in imagination I was displaying my feats before a large party which I had heard had assembled at Lord Yarborough's cottage at St. Lawrence to meet one of the Royal Dukes. But although I could thus be vain in my thoughts, I shrank from being actually brought forward, and did not at all enjoy personal remarks even when they were to my credit. But there was little fear of my being spoilt by praise, I was laughed at because I was easily made to cry, and scolded because I was perverse and troublesome; and I always felt myself rather a black sheep in the family, though I am sure I had longings

for something better, and vague dreams of distinction, kept under from the sense of being a girl.

The religious taste, of which I have before spoken, continued to show itself as time went on, though still my conduct was not influenced by it. When I was able to write with tolerable ease I remember composing little sermons for my younger sisters, which doubtless would have been much better applied to myself; and, whilst yet in the nursery, I learned the greater portion of the first chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, and can repeat it at this day. No one told me to do so, or even knew that I had done it. The beauty of the language, the exquisite musical rhythm of the sentences caught my ear, but I had little perception of anything beyond.

I am afraid I was by no means a pleasant child. My quick, irritable feelings were constantly bringing me into trouble, and then I shut myself up in my own thoughts and determined to keep aloof from every one. To be alone was never unpleasant to me. In the nursery my great pleasure was to sit by myself in a dark closet, opening into a room, with a little lanthorn by my side, and read a story, whilst my sisters played about. I enjoyed hearing their voices, but I did not wish to join them. But the self-consciousness which naturally goes with such a disposition was very easily seen; and I was told that I was affected, and this again acted upon my irritable temper, and I grew more really reserved, though I am not aware that my manner showed it. I am

alluding, however, rather to what I was as I grew beyond actual childhood. At the time I told the falsehood for which I was so severely punished I was about twelve years old, and had been for some time a boarder at Miss Crooke's school with my sisters.

People now would scarcely believe what Miss Crooke's house was like, especially the wretchedness of the large bedroom which we four sisters and another little girl inhabited; the uncarpeted floor, the two blocked-up windows, with a third which we were forbidden ever to look out of, on pain of paying half a crown; the great worm-eaten four-post bedsteads, without an atom of curtain or drapery; the deal tables for washing-stands, with the jugs holding rain-water, in which wonderful specimens of entomology disported themselves; the two or three old chairs which, with our trunks, were the only seats—it makes me shudder to look back upon it all, for there was nothing to cheer us, all was dreary and hopeless. The touch of the coarse sheets, on the first night of going back to school, and the sight of the large horn lanthorn, put upon the floor in the centre of the room, as our only light whilst undressing, were as chilling and depressing to the mind as to the body. In this large room we used to sit in the winter mornings learning our lessons until we were called down to a breakfast of milk and water, with an allowance of three pieces of thick bread and butter, but—except on rare occasions—no more,

however hungry we might be. We were permitted, when the weather was very cold, to stand near the fire for a few minutes to warm ourselves, and then we were sent to our seats to get on as well as we could for the rest of the day. Lessons went on from morning to night with me, as a rule, for I was always in arrears, as regarded what we termed double (or extra) lessons. These extra lessons were imposed for any and everything, even for speaking ungrammatically in playtime; saying "come here," instead of "come hither," being deemed an error. Once I remember having seventy lessons in arrears.

We were expected to accuse ourselves, and my conscience being a fidgety one I was always badly off; and when my regular lessons for the day were over, I used to sit until bed-time with my back to a long table, on which two candles were placed, and learn by heart columns of French idioms, knowing that I was scarcely advanced a step in the payment of my debt, and that I should be sure to increase it the next day. These lessons we said to each other, so Miss Crooke did not know how many were incurred, and when at the last she was told of my amount and my sister Emma's she saw that she had been unwise and wiped them out; but at that time the discipline was so strict, that no one dared to swerve from the exact law laid down as to the perfect correctness of the repetition. At eight o'clock we said our settled form of prayer, kneeling round the fire in the schoolroom, and taking turn week by week to repeat

it aloud, and then we were sent to our dreary rooms.

The school itself was curiously mixed in a social sense. There were a few children of the professional class, and many whose parents were farmers and shopkeepers; but we were too young to think about difference of position, and Miss Crooke, who, in some ways, was very wise, avoided anything like undesirable intimacy by obliging us all to use special forms of civility amongst each other. "Miss" was the one appellation, we never adopted Christian names—yet we played together when the opportunity was given, and, stiff and dull though the life was, there were some pleasures in it;—I doubt if children can exist without pleasure. If we said our lessons particularly well, we were allowed to have tea and sugar instead of milk and water; or (a most singular reward!) we could stand up before dinner began and say, "If you please, ma'am, I claim gravy", This implies that as a rule we did not have gravy, which was the fact. Such little extra indulgences made us for the time proud and happy. Now and then, also, if Miss Crooke was in a good humour, she would tell us a story, or give us an amusing book to read; and although it may seem hard that we should have had nothing but such trifles to brighten our lives, I have learnt from experience to be grateful for the temper of mind which was thus cultivated, and which has enabled me through my whole life to find amusement and diversion in small things.

Newport was a close borough then, and my father had great political influence from being agent for the most important persons in the island, with whom the election of members of Parliament rested. This was one cause of our lavish expenditure. There were persons of all ranks, from Lord Yarborough to men of business and farmers, constantly coming and going—many frequently dining with us, so that to be a family party was quite an exception; to say nothing of friends staying in the house. We had few relatives in the town whom I can remember, except my great-aunt, Mrs. Lydia Clarke (her brother Mr. Richard Clarke, with whom she had lived for years, died before I can recollect anything).

Aunt Clarke was a character in her way, stiff and stern, the head of the family, held in the highest respect by every one; she was extremely clever, and I imagine could make herself very agreeable, but all I recollect of her is what she was when, being upwards of eighty, she was bent with age and needed quiet and rest. Instead of a cap she always wore a little green silk bonnet, shading her eyes, and this to a child naturally marked her as some one quite distinct from the rest of the world. That she could be very outspoken when occasion required is evident from an anecdote related of her, which has always rested in my mind as affording a striking confession of human infirmity. A lady of her acquaintance, the wife of a poor curate, was always kind to the poor, but as time went on and the curate inherited

a baronetcy, and a fortune, his wife left off contributing to the charities of the town. My aunt one day said to her, "Lady ——, I cannot tell why it is, but when you were Mrs. —— you were ready to help us liberally; now that you are Lady —— we can get nothing from you". "It is very true, Mrs. Clarke," was the reply, "but I think that when God gave me money He shut up my heart."

Aunt Clarke had two old maid-servants, Molly and Betty, and one equally old man-servant, Richard, and they lived with her so long that at last they quite got the upper hand; any one else might be disturbed or put out—but not the servants. There is a tradition in the family that on one occasion old Richard was waiting at table, and Aunt Clarke begged to have another knife given her; the answer was, "I gave you one just now," a reply accepted quite calmly, and without comment. My great-aunt's companion was a niece, my father's only unmarried sister. Aunt Lydia or Lyddy, as we called her, was a very kind-hearted, simple-minded person, but very peculiar—an immense talker, very homely in her dress and manners, but with a decided taste for reading. My chief acquaintance with the writers of the eighteenth century is derived from reading to Aunt Lyddy papers in the *Spectator* and *The Rambler*, Mason's plays, Addison's *Cato*, etc. This we were often called upon to do when we were invited to dine with Aunt Clarke.

I first went to church in the evening on Christmas

night. There was always a good deal of music at that special service; the organ was played by an old man who used to boast "I alters Handel!" Anthems were sung—very badly—but of that I was then no judge; it was all very grand to me, and the church, lighted with tallow candles, stuck into the sides of the pews, looked infinitely imposing. The building was very large and quaint, with galleries and screens, and high square pews, and was sadly disfigured in all ways; but it was full of mystery and romance, for I never could make out how it was possible to reach the distant galleries, and one of my early dreams was that I might some day find my way there, and make out for myself what the people saw who were the Sunday inhabitants of these far-off regions.

After Aunt Clarke's death (in 1827) Aunt Lyddy took a small house in Newport, and lived by herself. Uncle Edwards about that time left Binstead, gave up his profession as a barrister, and went to Scotland. The taste for pictures and books, which remains with us all to this day, was instilled into us by his example. His choice little library at Binstead gave my brothers the wish to have one in Newport; and sums of money must have been spent upon our small collection. Besides certain special gems which our great-uncle, Mr. Clarke, had received as presents from Sir Richard Worsley, there were classical books, rare dictionaries, standard English works, all handsomely bound, but none of them, or at least very few, in a woman's line

(as women were then educated), and we were never allowed to touch them without permission, but yet I gained from them a knowledge of the names of the authors and a certain acquaintance with their style and principles, for the mere fact of sitting in the room which contained the library, as we often did, was a reason for all kinds of discussions and references. My first sight of German letters, and my first wish to know the language, was gained from being allowed to look at a beautiful copy of Bürger's *Lenore*, illustrated by striking line engravings, and having the German on one page and the English translation on the other.

My uncle was so particular about his books that he used to declare that when a child's finger had touched one it was spoilt. Acting upon this idea, he gave up certain books to us, when as children we stayed with him at Binstead, on condition of our never touching any others. My brothers had Glanvill's *History of Witches*, and we four had a handsome edition of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, which, being unexpurgated, was not the wisest choice that could have been made, though it gave me hours of entrancing delight at the time, and taught me to understand allusions to tales which have become part of general literature.

CHAPTER IV.

A RIGID DISCIPLINARIAN.

When I was nearly thirteen it was proposed that Ellen and I should leave Miss Crooke's, and go to a school at Bath, for the advantage of masters; this was my mother's doing. The education of girls was but little considered in those days, but my mother, in after years, told us that she had resolved her girls as well as her boys should be well educated, because then they would be prepared for any change of fortune which might meet them in life. Just at this time, after telling the falsehood to which I have before alluded, I had worked myself into a very fidgety self-worrying state of mind, which I daresay was one reason for the change of school. Miss Crooke herself must have been frightened at the mental condition to which her over-strictness had brought me, and she would have had still greater cause for alarm if she had known all that passed in my mind.

I was always given to strange scrupulous fancies, and not long before had made myself miserable, after reading about Jephthah's vow, because I imagined

that every time the thought of making a vow came into my head I had actually made it, and was bound to keep it. I even went so far as to worry myself with the question whether I was not bound to kill my mother, because I thought I had made a vow that I would. And another notion I had was that I must go off to America because I thought I had vowed I would. Of course no one knew about these troubles; I could have borne anything rather than talk to Miss Crooke, and I had never been accustomed to unreserve with my mother; and I bore all, as best I could, in great wretchedness of mind, until at last the fancies reached a point when my own common-sense told me they must be stopped at all hazards, and I determined to cure myself. With this view I accustomed myself, whenever the troublesome thoughts came into my head, deliberately to count six, and then say to myself, "No, I won't think of it," and thus the thoughts, being constantly kept down, after a time went away.

Of all this inner suffering Miss Crooke knew nothing; her only idea of my worries arose from what went on after I had confessed to her that I had told a falsehood, and thrown away the paper on which I had marked the letters "O. W." for "Old Witch"

The day after my grievous punishment for the lie, I became very miserable, from the thought of what Miss Crooke would say if she knew the full extent of my naughtiness. I went to my companions, and

warned them that I was going to confess that we had called her names. None of them, I imagine, supposed it possible that I should carry out my threat; but the following afternoon, after going through my usual reading lesson, I turned round to Miss Crooke, and said aloud, so that every one might hear, "If you please, ma'am, I called you a witch".

I can scarcely forbear a smile now when I think of the scene; but the moment was one of terrible agony to me then, for I never dreaded any one, and I don't think I ever could dread any one, as I did Miss Crooke, and I knew she would have no mercy upon me.

There was a fearful silence in the school after I had made my confession. Miss Crooke only said, "Go and sit down in your place," and so I did, and there I remained in a state of dull hopelessness until the day-scholars had gone. Then all the boarders were called up, made to put their hands on their hearts as a sign of sincerity, and a token that they would speak the truth, and were most solemnly commanded to tell all they knew about the wicked proceedings. It was a kind of inquisitional examination, and the punishment was a species of slow torture, for it went lingering on for weeks. We were all exiled from favour, not allowed to have any rewards for our lessons, and subjected to cold looks, and cold words, until at length we became comparatively callous to them. My conscience, however, went on working; having once begun to confess, the practice became a

necessity, and I begged that I might be allowed to tell every day the things I had done wrong, because I felt so wicked. Miss Crooke at first treated me as a converted penitent, but by degrees she must have become alarmed. My confessions verged on the ludicrous, and the climax must have been reached when having received an order in common with my companions to mention if we saw any black beetles in the schoolroom, I made it a subject of confession that I had seen a black beetle crawl out from under a large bureau, and had not told of it.

The state of mind which led to such a confession must have been incomprehensible to one who for years had not been subject in small matters to any daily human law but her own will. Miss Crooke talked to my mother, and the result was that I was one day told by my mother to leave off all confessions, and not to tell any one but herself my conscience worries. This order set me at rest at once, for my mother was so indulgent that I soon learned not to distress myself about imaginary shortcomings. And thus ended my first great trouble in life. And yet it did not really end, for to this day I can feel its effects. The greatest difficulties that have come in my way since, as regards self-discipline, have arisen from the fatal necessity of using in those early years my common-sense as a defence against the working of a morbid and over-strained conscience. It laid the foundation of a sophistical habit of mind; and some of the actions of my life for which I most condemn myself

can be traced to it. Happily I was by nature true, and though I might for a time satisfy myself in the indulgence of a wrong inclination by reasoning against what I persuaded myself was only the check of my fidgety conscience, yet in the end truth generally gained the victory; not, however, until I had often yielded sufficiently to be heartily ashamed of myself. I am speaking of this temper of mind now without reference to religious principle, which, of course, must be recognised as, through God's grace, the chief means by which we escape the temptations of sophistry.

It is but just to say when writing about Miss Crooke, that, notwithstanding all I suffered from her system of education, I always respected, and have never ceased to respect her. She acted entirely according to her view of what was right and would in the end be good for us; and she was very charitable and strictly honourable. I remember, when at school, a little girl came from London to be a boarder, much to our surprise, for we thought that education in London must be very superior to that which could be obtained in the Isle of Wight. Great care was taken of this child, and she was especially favoured. Years after I learned that she was the child of a London tradesman, to whom Miss Crooke's father had owed some money which he was unable to pay; and this was the only mode by which the obligation could be recognised.

When Miss Crooke gave up her school she had only secured forty pounds a year for all her expenses;

but she was so independent in her tone of mind that no one ventured openly to offer her any assistance. The knowledge that she could not have the comforts and the freedom from anxiety which her age required, and for which she had worked for so many years, distressed her friends; and a little plan was formed by which she might be helped without hurting her feelings. It was arranged that a formal letter should be written to her by a lawyer in London, stating that if she would send a certificate of her birth and baptism to him, he was empowered to forward to her fifty pounds annually. No explanation was given, but the necessity of sending every year, on a fixed day, a certificate that she was alive, was strongly enforced.

In her simplicity and ignorance of business Miss Crooke, though surprised and delighted, made no inquiries. She said that she supposed it was money due to her father which was thus paid to her; and yearly, as the day came round, she was in a state of excitement and anxiety until she had sent her certificate in due form. Thus she was freed from care, and had enough for her small needs; and she died without any knowledge of the source from which the money came. I believe my brother William, who had been taught by Miss Crooke to read and spell, was the chief originator of the innocent deception, and contributed largely towards carrying it out.

Very soon after I had disturbed the school by my confession, Ellen and I were taken away from Miss

Crooke's care. It was a rejoicing time. The last night that we all stood up to repeat some lesson—I forget what—and when I had to give up my tickets and say "Good-bye" to absent-and-disgrace-lessons, I felt proudly ambitious for the future. I was going into a new world, and in that world I was resolved to make my mark.

CHAPTER V.

SCHOOLDAYS AT BATH.

THE only time that I had ever been out of the Isle of Wight before we went to our Bath school, was when I was twelve years old, and stayed for a short time at Camberwell with Aunt Hanbury, and saw some of the sights of London; but a new school was quite a different matter. I was not to be amused, but to work and obey, and I left home with a brave heart. We slept the first night at Southampton, and the following morning started at eight o'clock, in the coach, in which places had been secured for us, and under the care of one of our brothers, arrived in Bath, at 20 Camden Place (now Camden Crescent), between four and five in the afternoon.

It is strange to me now to see how this question of a new school was arranged. No one knew personally Miss Aldridge and her sister Caroline, to whose care we were entrusted. They had the reputation of being nice people (as the expression is), and a lady who made inquiries about them for my mother, liked them; and then my mother went to see them herself, and thought everything about the house neat and

comfortable and home-like; but there might have been much that was unsatisfactory underneath the outward appearance. My mother had never been at school, and was unsuspicious of evil, and, having a very quick insight into character, she depended upon her own judgment, and upon the whole was not mistaken. The house was comfortable, though we had no provision for privacy in our bedroom; and Miss Aldridge and her sister were kind and good; and if they had, like the rest of the world, some weak points, they had also very sterling and valuable qualities to counterbalance them. Whatever evil I learned whilst I was with them was from my own fault.

There were twelve pupils, and we were treated very much as we might have been at home. No teachers lived in the house, and we were watched over individually, and in some degree known and understood. In one respect our new governesses never could have understood me, for they offended my taste grievously in matters of religion. They had adopted the style of talking which in those days was thought to be a necessary part of Christian belief and conduct. This repelled me, and I always shut myself up in a sevenfold fence of reserve when religious subjects were introduced. Miss Caroline would put her pretty head to one side as she sat gracefully at the dinner-table, on a Sunday, and remark with an earnest drawl, "We had a beautiful and instructive sermon to-day. I trust we shall all

profit by it;" and then quite cheerfully, "which will you have—beef or mutton?" Of course I seized upon the beef or mutton, and put aside the sermon, and I am afraid I must often have given the impression of having a very hard heart.

There was no straining of the conscience, however, which was one very great comfort. We were left in a great degree to ourselves as to the time which was spent in preparing our lessons. Masters came on certain days, and we were expected to be ready for them, but that was all. This suited me very well, for I was always eager to be beforehand with everything I had to do, and never thought myself at liberty to amuse myself, unless I had finished not only the exercises and compositions for the next day, but had begun those for the day following. This is one of the characteristics which has marked me through life, and which has its evil as well as its good side. To be constantly looking forward and planning for the future is not wise, and one may work too much as well as too little. The railway express pace is undesirable for mind and body for a continuance.

We were not well taught at this Bath school. The French master was an indifferent one, and professed to teach Italian also which I question if he was at all competent to do. We had a second-rate dancing mistress, a fairly good sentimental singing master (who showed his grief for his child's death by playing psalm tunes on the piano in the short intervals between the lessons to the several pupils), a very

inferior drawing master, whose artistic talent was not at all equal to that of Miss Aldridge herself; and a music master with a great reputation, a violent temper, and an amount of conceit and vanity which made him tell us that he slept in white kid gloves to keep his hands white. He frightened me so much that I could never do my best before him; but I had really very little talent either for music or drawing, whilst my elder sister had both in a remarkable degree, and came forward in consequence so prominently that I always felt myself to be in the background. As to the more essential subjects of instruction, we were not bound by strict laws. We had a master for arithmetic, and were carefully taught; but the lessons we were expected to learn by heart were repeated according to the sense and not the exact words, and those who were quick got them up in a few minutes, said them fairly well, and forgot them immediately afterwards. Poetry, however, did not admit of this laxity. We learned passages from the best authors, and my delight in Walter Scott made me add to the regular lesson large portions of "The Lady of the Lake" which are fresh in my memory at this moment.

Certainly those two years and a half of school life were, in my case, years of most rapid growth for good and evil. Emulation and companionship, and a constant collision of wits, brought out all I knew, and gave me a longing to know more; but at the same time they taught me things which I have since

felt it would be the greatest boon that could be conferred upon me to forget. How one hates oneself for having gathered the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil wilfully, and how keen and lasting the punishment is!

Much that was wrong went on at our Bath school unknown to our governesses; not so much actions as conversation, involving feelings and principles in which were to be found the germs of life-long motives and actions; but we were not a bad set of girls in many ways. We had a sense of honour amongst us, a love of truth, a perception of the *folly* of *folly* even when we indulged ourselves in it, and a good deal of religious seed, showing itself in odd ways, such as love of controversy, and delight in some favourite preacher—things which one should naturally condemn, but which were not so entirely without an element of good as they might have appeared to be on the surface. And there was life too—vigour and independence. We formed a book-club amongst ourselves, chose and purchased some special favourite, or one which we heard praised, read it in turn, and then sold it by auction. We bore openly to tell each other our faults, etc.—who was ill-tempered, who was selfish, who was thought the cleverest; no one was supposed to be angry however much self-love might be wounded. And we had clear perceptions upon most points; we saw what was inconsistent in those who were placed over us, and if sometimes we turned our masters and mistresses into ridicule, it

was never from unkindness, but from a sense of the ludicrous, for which there was really a cause.

I am sure some of us heartily wished to be better than we were, and now and then tried very earnestly to be so. Lucy Nedham and Marianne Seymour, who were afterwards our sisters-in-law, were those whose tone was highest in the school, and the one thing on which I have ever since that time prided myself (if I may use the expression) is that Ellen and I had sufficient good sense to make them our special friends.

I had at that time great ideas of the duty of self-examination, and almost got into disgrace by being so long at my prayers; and latterly I formed a habit of going by myself, about five o'clock in the afternoon, to a little room where boxes, walking-dresses, etc., were kept (for we were not allowed to go to our bedrooms after leaving them in the mornings), and there I went through a short self-examination, and said a little prayer standing. Some of these feelings I have described in *Laneton Parsonage* as hints for girls at school, but Madeline Clifford is as unlike what I was as light is to darkness.

CHAPTER VI.

HOME EDUCATION.

I WAS confirmed at school, with the companion to whom I have referred before. It was at my own request. I always look back upon this period as being, through God's merciful help, a kind of turning point in my life. Good principles which had before been only floating in my mind became fixed, and a reason for casting away those which were bad was suggested and enforced; yet not from any external help or instruction, and not from any special outburst of devotional feeling, for I was then experiencing a trial of indescribable misery connected with religion. I was full of sceptical thoughts. I did not like them, or indulge them. On the contrary, they were hateful to me, though they haunted me. They came to me quite suddenly, one Sunday evening, in Walcot Church during the evening service. I don't remember that anything in particular occasioned them, any verse in the lessons, or any word or expression in the prayers, and they took all possible forms. Everything in the Bible that was at all perplexing was turned into a stumbling-block, and

came before me, not only during the reading of the Scriptures, but at all times. I tried to reason against the difficulties, but that only increased the evil.

Sometimes I stopped the thoughts by remembering the good and wise men of whom I had heard who were Christians, for I said to myself that I might well follow them and trust them: and at last I was able resolutely to crush the thoughts, as I had crushed the wild fancies which took possession of me at Miss Crooke's. This was done by a short quick prayer, and an almost physical effort to turn away from the suggestions. In that way I kept them under; I can scarcely say that they were entirely conquered, for there was a tender spot in my mind for years and years after—a wound healed which might be reopened, and would not bear being touched.

It was not until middle life that I could face these phantom doubts boldly; then, when my reason had fully developed, and I had learnt what the help of God meant, I could venture to inquire into the foundation of sceptical questionings, and could recognise that they were but the "baseless fabric of a dream," that reason as well as faith is on the side of Christianity, and that the difficulties of unbelief are tenfold greater than those of belief. But at the time when these thoughts first came to me I was simply miserable. There has been no trial in after life equal to that which they brought upon me—the sense of guilt, and the dread of not being forgiven, and the being followed about, as it were, by a spectre

of evil from which I could not escape. I have sat in the drawing-room at Camden Place practising my music mechanically, whilst reasoning upon the probability of the Jewish miracles till I was nearly wild. And I had no one to turn to. I could have borne anything rather than mention what I was suffering; I so dreaded my governesses' way of talking about religion, and I had never been accustomed to unreserve upon that subject with any one, not even with my mother, for her temperament was very unlike mine. She was enthusiastic, and outspoken as to her feelings, whilst I could not bear any words or expressions which were not quiet and suggestive rather than demonstrative.

And in this state of mind I was confirmed with one companion. Now, I can see how the very wretchedness I endured made me more earnest, for I really was in earnest. I had no half-intentions for the future, and as well as I could I tried to prepare myself for the solemn rite. The help of a clergyman was in those days too often merely nominal: at least I am sure it was as far as I was concerned. We were taken to the rector of the parish, and asked one or two questions out of the Catechism, to which we gave correct answers, and then we were told that we did very well; and that was all. Miss Aldridge gave us Henry's *Communicant's Companion*—a fearful book filled with questions which it would have taken months to answer—and I tried to find time for self-examination out of school hours, and at first thought

myself obliged to answer every question, and at last gave up the attempt in despair. My own sense told me it was in vain. Nothing was said to me definitely about the Holy Communion, and in fact I received it for the first time after my return home.

The confirmation day was a strange medley. I think it must have been partly a holiday, for I remember walking up and down Camden Place, in the afternoon, and watching a balloon, which had been sent up from the gardens below. It was the first I had ever seen, but it only ascended a little way, and came down upon the roofs of some houses in the town. Naturally it was a source of great excitement to us. I know that I felt as if I ought to be grave, and thoughtful, and different from the others, but I don't know whether I was so.

We were to leave school almost immediately after the confirmation. I was then about fifteen, and Ellen was seventeen. We went home to undertake the education of our two younger sisters, Emma and Janetta. Plans for our work had already been made by us. Marianne Seymour helped us much. We used latterly to spend our play hours in making out lists of celebrated contemporaries, and in this way trying to get up a little information beyond the regular routine of lessons.

My whole heart was bent at that time upon teaching Emma and Janetta, and making them happy. The pleasure of telling them that they were to leave Miss Crooke's school was very great. Every ar-

rangement was made for our comfort at home. We had a room appropriated to us as a schoolroom, and ultimately we had a new and very pretty room built for us, but I am afraid we did not properly recognise the thought which was bestowed upon us. I suppose few persons do understand the extent of their parents' care until they are called upon themselves to think for others.

Ellen and I began teaching most energetically, and upon the whole, perhaps, things went on as well as could have been—or rather ought to have been—expected; for it is really in vain to imagine that home education, under sisters, will ever have the spirit and energy of a school. One must take the good and the evil together in all such cases; or rather, one must do what is pointed out for us, as the best to be done under the circumstances, for these questions are usually decided for us by external surroundings over which we have little control.

Just after we left school and came home to teach our young sisters, William was ordained, and as curate had the charge of the parish of Whippingham for a friend, Mr. James Ward, who was ill and was sent abroad for a year. I can see now that it was a singular arrangement, because William had had no experience in parochial work, and had never worked under a rector; but such things were not then uncommon. That year, 1830, was a very sunny year—the sunniest of my life; but if it had bright lights

it had also deep shadows. We went backwards and forwards between Newport and Whippingham continually, the distance being little more than three miles. This interfered with the lessons we had marked out for Emma and Janetta, and fretted me much; and when I remonstrated I was thought fidgety. Not that I disliked going to Whippingham: quite the contrary; but the irregularity disturbed all my plans. The parsonage, then a large house built of wood, standing in lovely grounds, was a perfect paradise to me. I really idolised my brother William, whose great abilities, fervent piety and warm affection I was beginning to understand and appreciate; and who captivated me with his sermons and poetry and conversation. I never loved any one else in the same intense way, and to him I owe (through the mercy of God) all that is most precious for Time and Eternity. But the feeling, like everything else of its kind, brought suffering with it, very acute at times.

I was so entirely engrossed in my feeling for my brother that I had no thought to give to any one else. Ellen was taken to dinner parties, balls, etc., but I was too young to go with her, and was quite contented when the lessons could go on regularly, and William would look happy and be fond of me. I used to study by myself, for I knew that I was wofully ignorant. Such books as Russell's *History of Modern Europe* and Robertson's *Charles the Fifth*, I read, and also Watts on the *Improvement of the*

Mind, and I plodded through an Italian history of the Venetian Doges, lent me by an intimate and valued friend of my father, Mr. Turnbull, who had travelled much, and was fond of books, and, as he lived in Newport, was often with us. I taught myself besides to read Spanish—for having found a Spanish *Don Quixote* lying about, which no one claimed, I took possession of it, bought a grammar and dictionary, and set to work to master the contents of the book which I knew so well by name. The elements of botany on the Linnæan system was another of my attempted acquirements, but I am afraid my studies were very superficial: I knew nothing perfectly, but I read everything that came in my way. There was an excellent town library in Newport, from which I could get any good modern works; and, besides the graver literature, I had always some lighter book on hand, and especially delighted in Walter Scott's novels and poetry. Byron, too, was a great favourite.

CHAPTER VII.

LIFE IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

THE one important event of the Whippingham year was my brother William's engagement to a lady, a little older than himself. The idea was not satisfactory to my father and mother, for it would, if carried out, have put an end to all prospect of University distinction, and in the end the engagement was broken off.

It was a mournful ending to the happy year, or at least the year which was happy to me. I daresay to those more immediately concerned in all the Whippingham arrangements, it was a year of much anxiety. The curacy could not in any case have been permanent, and it was only held whilst Mr. James Ward was abroad, and he died before the year expired.

The Isle of Wight was gayer at that time than it is now. There were archery meetings at Carisbrooke Castle, and balls and dinner parties—and, as our brothers' friends were frequently staying with us, there was a great deal of mirth and excitement in house—to say nothing of riding parties, picnics

and excursions. The great social event of the year in the island was the Archery Ball. One lady was chosen as patroness for each year, and was called upon to select the dress which the archeresses were to wear at the meetings. Very ugly it often was, and rather expensive, and we were always very glad that we did not actually belong to the club; but the meetings were very pleasant. The shooting went on in the bowling-green of Carisbrooke Castle, and there was a dance afterwards in the rooms—since taken down—which had formed part of Lord Bolton's house when he was governor of the island at the end of the last century. The Archery Ball had taken the place of the Hunting Club Ball, which was extinct before we began to go into society.

For the latter ball there was a head or manager, termed the comptroller, appointed by a committee composed of the chief gentlemen in the island. They invited the guests, and chose a lady patroness to be the queen of the evening. On the night of the ball she stood at the upper end of the room, and every one who came to the entertainment was formally presented to her. The last lady patroness of the Hunting Club Ball was Rosa Hill, the only daughter of Colonel Hill, of St. Boniface House, Ventnor. She afterwards married the Rev. James White, and lived at Bonchurch for many years. I mention these few particulars because they show the gradual change in the island society, brought about, no doubt, by steamboats and railways. In the last century and even

when I was a girl, Newport was in all respects the capital of the island. Ryde was scarcely in existence then. I can remember when it had only one straggling street. Ventnor consisted of two or three thatched cottages, a small hotel, "The Crab and Lobster," and a boarding-house, but there was no church. Cowes and Yarmouth were not very unlike what they are now.

Newport, being the centre of the island, was a pleasant place to live in as regarded general society —though in itself it was dull; but society did not interfere much with me, as I did not go out and scarce wished to do so. About that time I was rather out of health—and remained so more or less for four or five years. I do not remember having been at more than half a dozen balls in my whole life.

Our greatest family gaiety or change was going into the country for the summer months. We were at Sea View, near Ryde, after the Whippingham year. William had friends—young Oxford men—reading with him; they were domiciled in one of the very few cottages which had then been built near the sea, and which were chiefly inhabited by smugglers, whose wives let lodgings, and so kept up an appearance of respectability for their husbands. We had rooms near, and there was constant intercourse between the two households. The accommodation in the lodgings was very bad, and there was a good deal of personal discomfort, yet it was a very enjoy-

able time. I wonder now that we did not get into trouble by flirting or falling in love; but we did not, and I believe our brothers were our safeguards: we cared more for them than we did for any of their friends, who, as a rule, were pupils, and were regarded by us rather as grown-up schoolboys.

I have forgotten public matters at this time, but they were very troublesome and unpleasant. The year William was at Whippingham, the Reform Bill was causing agitation everywhere. Newport being a close borough, was naturally extremely Radical. My father, having had the whole management of the Parliamentary interest of the island up to this time, was unpopular. People said that he had made a great deal of money in connection with political matters, and that when the Reform Bill passed we should be ruined; the truth being that my father, instead of receiving money, had expended large sums in keeping up the interest of the Holmes family, who were really the lords of the borough, and were at that time represented only by a lady, the widow of the last baronet, Sir Leonard Worsley-Holmes. Just before the passing of the Reform Bill, there was some idea, I believe, of my father being himself one of the members, but it would never have done. He could not have managed the expense, even if he could have undertaken the work. Mr. Mount, of Wasing Place, Reading, was one of the last members under the old system, and I remember how he and my father were hooted as they walked

up the street arm-in-arm when the election was over.

This feeling lasted after the Reform Bill had passed, and on the occasion of the next election there were considerable disturbances in the town, and our windows were broken. The elections were very exciting, and we girls were inclined to take in good faith the civilities of the Conservative or Tory candidates, who were a great deal at our house. The only thing which excited our distrust was the fact that one of them, who was a great chess-player, allowed Ellen to win a game. She was triumphant at the moment, but when she found that the gentleman had beaten the famous automaton chess-player in London, she discovered that her victory was merely a piece of electioneering flattery, and valued it as it deserved.

In 1833 William had the charge of the parish of Yaverland for the summer months. He took it for a friend, the Rev. Robert Sherson, and we went there with a large party, some of whom lived at the farm-house, and some at the parsonage. We were a merry party, though even then care was creeping upon us, or at least we fancied it was. Robert's health made us at times anxious, and Ellen and I were old enough to have responsibilities and fidget ourselves when everything did not go smoothly; and we were keenly alive to the conflicts of different wills, and very sensitive about questions of attention and kindness, etc. Now that years have gone by I can

trace, from that Yaverland summer, some of the circumstances which, by bringing the different members of the party into intimate association, ultimately influenced their history and their surroundings at the end of life.

But notwithstanding the small worries, which are unavoidable where many have to be consulted and cared for, we had on the surface a bright, almost unclouded life. We never thought of expense except in that vague way in which, in my own case, the idea had grown up with me from my childhood, that we were spending a great deal of money, and that some day or other, possibly, we should suffer for it; the idea being occasionally deepened by some observation of my mother's. She had, I am sure, fears upon the subject. She was never made acquainted with the details of office matters; but the fact that about this time my father separated from his partner, Mr. Hearn, must have clearly diminished the family income. I was not very well or strong when at Yaverland. It must have been a silly, provoking illness—nervousness, hysterics, and follies of that kind. I have often wondered since how my friends bore with me as they did. Worries also there were in my own mind which no one knew or dreamed of—the old phantom of evil in the form of sceptical doubts, and an increasing consciousness that I teased William by being fond of him. The real cares of life are much more easy to bear than imaginary ones. I have had sufficient experience of both.

I think the bright part of my life ended soon after Lucy's[1] marriage. Cares thickened around me, and so cast a shadow upon myself. Yet we were very happy when Lucy's first child (Mary Ellen) was born; all the interest of the family seemed to gather round the baby, and a nightly pilgrimage was made to the cradle in which she slept, that we might kiss her before we went to bed.

In 1835, Edwards, who had taken orders, had the curacy of Hursley. Mr. Gilbert Heathcote held the living, and Ellen and I were sent to Hursley to be out of the way whilst Lucy was ill. We were at the old vicarage, which had then only one sitting-room, or at least only one which we could use, for the floor of the other room was covered with Mr. Heathcote's books. They were very kindly left for our use, and I made an acquaintance with Sir Walter Scott's *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, and read Shakespeare to Ellen, and led a quiet life, seeing no one. The parsonage at Hursley was then what it is now, externally, but the church was a specimen of the old bare and dreary ecclesiastical buildings almost universal at that period; and the service suited it. The musical instruments were tuned before the prayers began, and an irreverent scraping and twanging went on for some time as the congregation assembled, whilst the singing was of the same character.

[1] Lucy Nedham, daughter of General Nedham, and a school-friend of Elizabeth M. Sewell, was married to Henry Sewell at Broadwater Church, near Worthing, on the 15th May, 1834.

Ellen always said she enjoyed the six weeks at Hursley vicarage excessively, but I don't think I did. I was out of health and out of spirits, and full of morbid fancies, for which a scourge would have been a good cure. I was longing for some one to take an interest in me, and had not yet learnt to make life happy by taking an interest in others; so I was self-conscious and moody, and, never feeling very well, used to think myself much worse than I was, and liked others to do the same, a very uncomfortable, unsatisfactory state of mind, which, however, I am not sorry to have experienced. Vanity was at the bottom of it, I have no doubt now.

We went back to the island to spend the summer at Northcourt, a very pretty old house, uninhabited, though furnished, and kept up well. It belonged to Sir Willoughby Gordon, and was lent to us on certain conditions, such as the payment of the gardener, etc. We were at Northcourt till November, 1835, but the latter part of the time I was in London having medical advice. I had been there before with Ellen —for masters, soon after leaving school. We stayed with our aunt, Mrs. Hanbury. Mr. Hanbury had moved from Camberwell, and was living in a large old-fashioned house in John Street, Bedford Row. I never liked London, and now, not being well, did not see it under the best auspices. The house and the situation were alike dreary, and though my aunt and Mr. Hanbury were extremely kind, there was nothing to make up for the loss of my bright home.

The only gleam of romance I had in connection with the place was derived from the fact that the large bare house reminded me of a description of one like it in an old novel by Miss Hawkins—*The Countess and Gertrude.*

The people I accidentally met in London were also for the most part distasteful to me; religion seemed entirely out of their thoughts. Whatever might have been our family failings, and doubtless they were many, it was always considered that "one thing was needful," and being with William had deepened this feeling greatly in us all. Irreligious society, even if there was nothing said or done absolutely offensive to my feelings, was like putting me into an atmosphere in which I could not breathe. I shall never forget spending a Sunday at a lawyer's house in Chancery Lane, and during the long summer evening looking out upon the moon shining over the tops of the dingy houses in the narrow street, and hearing irreverent conversation, and being asked to play the overture to "Semiramide," which in my moral cowardice I consented to do, though I had always been led to think that only sacred music was allowable on Sundays; and at last feeling really relieved by hearing a gentleman who was present say, that he always went to church himself and made his servants do the same.

CHAPTER VIII.

MY FIRST LITERARY ESSAY.

A PLEASANT year or two externally succeeded our Northcourt summer. I had a very delightful friend in Mrs. Charles Worsley, the wife of the incumbent of Newport, and we often had friends staying with us, and saw a good deal of society in a small way. My mind also had become much quieted and strengthened by the reading of Butler's *Analogy*, which I had always heard mentioned with admiration, and which I stumbled upon, as it seemed accidentally (though doubtless it was a Providential help sent me), when we were spending a few days at the Hermitage. I took it up first for curiosity, and read it through nearly, but not quite to the end; feeling very much afraid all the time that some one would inquire into my studies, and being greatly humiliated by an observation made by William, who one day found me with it in my hand. His surprised tone, as he exclaimed, "You can't understand that," made me shrink into my shell of reserve, and for years I never owned to any one that Butler's *Analogy* had

been to me, as it has been to hundreds, the stay of a troubled intellect and a weak faith.

Ellen and I about this time began to undertake parish work: Mrs. Worsley wanted help, and we were glad to have a definite district assigned to us. My experiences in that line I afterwards described in *Katherine Ashton.*

It was the district which first suggested to me any definite idea of writing. I think that I must always have had a vague consciousness of being able to do something in that way, but it had never been brought out. I remember, at Whippingham, thinking that I would write a historical story for Emma and Janetta, and beginning something connected with Charles the Second and his escape after the battle of Worcester; but it never came to anything though I spoke of it to my mother, and I can recollect saying to her, "You know, mamma, Miss Edgeworth has written stories, and so perhaps I might be able to do the same";—a speech followed by a painful consciousness of having been terribly conceited, for I had all the time a great dislike to authoresses, and once startled a young lady who was dining with us by stating it as my opinion that women had no business to write. No one certainly could have had less perception in childhood or youth of possessing any power of imagination, or indeed of having any talent of any kind than I had.

What with my lack of accomplishments, and the unsatisfactory state of my health, I was so little ac-

customed to come forward, or to think it likely that I could be a favourite with any one, or even be noticed, that I used to feel quite surprised if any person, except some very intimate friends, spoke to me when I went down the street. I used to wonder how they knew me. And yet I can now trace a pleasure in the exercise of imagination far back to a time when, as a little child, I amused myself with describing to my mother a new kind of town which I should like to build, and in which there were to be handsome streets of private houses, and disagreeable things, especially butchers' shops, should all be put out of the way, and afterwards at Miss Crooke's—when my favourite topic on a Sunday afternoon, if we went for a walk, was a plan for a college for girls; the idea being suggested by my brothers having distinguished themselves at Winchester and Oxford. Happily there was no one near to make remarks upon anything I said or did, and I was such a very naughty child, and so continually in disgrace, that the question of ability was always kept in the background, whilst my education was so deficient as regarded information, that whenever I did compare myself with others it was to wonder at the extent of my own ignorance.

My powers of composition were, however, a little exercised in one way after I left school. We had a doll's theatre, and we dressed up figures, and painted scenes, and then, as Ellen was the artist, I did my part by making out little plays to be read behind the scenes. The story of Ali Cogia, in the *Arabian*

Nights, I turned into dialogue—and I even went so far as to write a little play of my own, which was acted in this way; but I was very much ashamed of having it known that I had attempted anything of the kind, and was conscious that it was dull and stupid, and only useful for want of something better. The play, if I recollect rightly, had a moral purpose, and was decidedly heavy. Its subject was a struggle between two rival claimants of a throne, which should be the more disinterested. I doubt if there was any love in it, and certainly, if there was, it was a very subordinate matter of interest.

Besides this play, I began, the year before we went to Northcourt, a story which never came to an end. There was little or no plot in it, and my only object was to bring out the working of religion in the mind of a young girl, who had been allowed to grow up with very little teaching upon the subject. I had not the least idea of publishing it, and only wrote it for my own amusement, and could never make up my mind whether it was good for anything. One sentence in particular I remember being doubtful about. It was a description—and contained a simile in which the calm sea was compared to a child sleeping in its mother's arms. It sounded well, but I had a distant suspicion that it might be great nonsense. I showed the beginning of the story to Ellen; but when I asked her whether she would like to hear it, the answer "By no means" was certainly not encouraging. I persisted, however, and gained my point, and she

owned that there was some interest in it. My mother also heard the first chapter, but the tale died a natural death. It was too defective in plot, and too unformed in principle to be of real value.

As for Church principles, I did not then know what they meant, and when a friend (a clergyman) first suggested that the English Church claimed to have the Apostolical Succession, I did not know what he was talking about. With regard to baptism, I know that I used as a child to wonder what the particular good of it was, and why people made such a point of having their children baptised. It was not likely, therefore, that there should be much of Church principle in my first attempt at writing a story. I knew more about such questions in my district-visiting days.

I had seen some numbers of *Tracts for the Times* lying on the counter in a bookseller's shop in Newport, and they had excited my curiosity, and led to inquiry; and, as my brother William's opinions had by that time become marked, he soon succeeded in indoctrinating all of us with them. A very great comfort it certainly was to myself to have my ideas cleared upon subjects which had long been floating about in my brain, and worrying me almost without my knowing it. Especially it was a relief to me to find great earnestness and devotion in a system which allowed of reserve in expression, and did not make the style of conversation, which I had met with in the only definitely religious tales I had read, a necessary part of Christianity. Mrs. Sherwood's

Tales and others of a similar kind, described children as quoting texts, and talking of their feelings in an unnatural way, or what seemed to me unnatural; and I had really suffered so much at school from things said to me which jarred upon my taste that it was perfect rest to be able to talk upon religious subjects without hearing or using cant phrases.

This is certainly rather low ground for adopting, or being influenced by church principles; but I am not saying why they convinced me, but only why they harmonised with my feelings, and were attractive to me. At the time when they were first brought before me I went on without thinking—almost without knowing what I was learning, though I was more and more acquiring a knowledge of my true position as a Church person, and of the privileges and duties which belonged to me in consequence.

The blessing bestowed upon a Christian by baptism was the point which most impressed me, and this I tried to bring out in the first thing I ever wrote which was published—*Stories on the Lord's Prayer*. I meant it at the time for a tract. I used to give away the Christian Knowledge Society tracts in our district, and thought them intensely dull; and as I had a good deal of time to myself from not being very strong, and going very little into society, I thought I would try and write something more interesting. I wrote one or two chapters, and then put them by—always having the feeling that I was attempting what was beyond me. Then I began

Amy Herbert—I scarcely know why—only I had been reading some story of Mrs. Sherwood's, which struck me as having pretty descriptions, and I fancied I could write something of the same kind; and as a matter of curiosity I determined to make the attempt. I read both the few chapters of the intended tract, and the beginning of *Amy Herbert* to my sisters, and they liked them; and then I finished the *Stories on the Lord's Prayer;* but *Amy Herbert* was for a while put aside, as I scarcely knew what I meant to do with it, and working out anything like a plot seemed beyond me. Afterwards I went on with it slowly from time to time.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OXFORD LEADERS.

An event which was a great trial to us all—Aunt Anne's death—occurred in 1837, the year after we were at Northcourt. It made the first gap in the family since I had been able fully to understand and feel such losses. My aunt had occupied a peculiar place amongst us, both as regarded affection and usefulness, and when it was vacant there was no one to fill it. She had been my mother's constant companion and friend, and perhaps from this circumstance we were less what may be termed intimate with our mother than daughters of our age would naturally have been.

Newport was full of Dissent, and the clergyman of the place was unpopular. There was no Church school until my mother and some of her influential friends exerted themselves to set on foot what was called a National School, on the plan, I believe, of Dr. Bell, the great authority of the day for educational subjects; whilst the Dissenters had a Lancastrian School, on the principles of Mr. Joseph Lancaster. As regarded the poor and suffering,

both Church people and Dissenters worked together—on the whole amicably; but the influential Dissenters were for the most part Unitarians, and the distinctive doctrines of Christianity were, in consequence, kept rather in the background—especially on the occasion of the Benevolent Society working parties, in which all shades of thought met, whilst reading aloud was the order of the day.

Great was the difficulty, I remember, of finding any book which would not clash with the special opinions of some one of the party, but caution kept us on safe ground, and, as far as I could judge, all worked harmoniously, though I was not admitted into the secrets of the society. My brother William gave an amusing account of these parties when he wrote his novel *Hawkstone*.

In 1839 my brother Robert married. His wife was Miss Seymour, whom I have before mentioned as one of our school friends. We had known her family for years, for Mr. Seymour, who was a clergyman, had once been the curate-in-charge at Chale, and had afterwards lived in Newport.

About this time (in 1840) I had an opportunity of seeing the most marked men of the Oxford leaders, with the exception of Dr. Pusey. My brother Edwards and I had been invited to dine and sleep at the house of Mr. Yonge of Otterbourn, and to be present at the consecration of a church at Ampthill, built through his instrumentality, and architecturally more perfect than Otterbourn Church, which was also his work.

At the time the latter was built it was considered so beautiful, that travellers by the coach from Southampton to Winchester were advised by a writer in one of the chief *Reviews* (the *Quarterly*, I think) to stop at Otterbourn for the express purpose of seeing it. As the vestry of the church was at the east end behind the chancel, and the clergyman had to pass through the railing before the altar in order to reach the reading-desk, it may be seen how curiously imperfect were then the ideas of the proprieties of church arrangement. (Otterbourn Church has been greatly improved since by Miss Yonge.)

In 1840, Miss Yonge was a bright attractive girl, at least ten years younger than myself, and very like her own Ethel in the *Daisy Chain*. Great interest was expressed by her and her mother in Mrs. Mozley (Cardinal Newman's sister), the author of a tale called the *Fairy Bower*, which had appeared shortly before. It was the precursor of the many tales, illustrative of the Oxford teaching, that were written at this period, and which were hailed with special satisfaction by young people, who turned from the texts, and prayers, and hymns, which Mrs. Sherwood had introduced into her stories, and yet needed something higher in tone than Miss Edgeworth's morality.

Miss Yonge expressed the greatest wish to see Mrs. Mozley, who, she had hoped, would be present at the consecration, and to thank her for her book, but the authoress did not appear. There were, however, other and more important celebrities present

at the dinner which followed the consecration at Otterbourn. The names of Keble, Newman, Isaac Williams, Henry Wilberforce, and of Serjeant Bellasis (a barrister, who for a time was a marked adherent of the Oxford party), will at once show to any one at all acquainted with the spirit of those days how intensely interesting the party was to me. Three of the guests, alas!—Newman, Wilberforce and Serjeant Bellasis—afterwards seceded to the Church of Rome, but on the day of the Ampthill consecration the fear of such a change had not suggested itself, and I looked upon Newman with the most intense reverence, for I knew that he was regarded as the most influential and saintly man in the English Church.

Keble (I suppose, as I am speaking of a dinner-party, I ought to say Mr. Keble) took me in to dinner. He was always painfully shy, and conversation was a difficulty. The weather was chilly, and he asked me which side of the table I would prefer. My one longing was to be near Newman, and in a moment it struck me that he would be certain not to choose the side near the fire; and I made my choice accordingly, and to my great joy, mingled, however, with alarm, I found myself seated next to him.

His observations, so far as they were addressed to myself, were not so very unlike what he is reported to have said on an occasion when a lady, full of admiration for him, was introduced and the first words he said to her were—"Ice is as thick as a penny

piece this morning!" All I can remember is that we spoke of the strange dim recollections awakened by places which we have once visited, when we visit them again after a distance of years. He quoted the scene in *Guy Mannering* as a good description of the feelings called forth under such circumstances, and said he had felt something of the same kind once on revisiting Brighton. But the one impression I did receive at that dinner-party, was of Newman's reverence for sacred things. The dilapidated and disgraceful condition of a church at Stafford was mentioned by some one at the table, and general remarks were made, and, in the course of them, certain absurd details were mentioned. Every one at table, except Newman, saw the ludicrous side, and laughed, but he was silent; and when I glanced at him, there was an expression of such deep pain in his face, that I was recalled at once to the consciousness that we were treading upon sacred ground.

That was the only time I ever spoke to Newman. I had heard him preach in Oxford before I met him. I was one of a rather gay young party. Sunday afternoon came, and my brother William said quietly, "I think we will go to St. Mary's and hear Newman". I did not know then what the preacher's power of influence was, and I don't think the sermon itself made any great impression on me, but what did remain was the effect produced by the personality of the man—his absolute earnestness, the stillness of his manner, his low tones. He spoke as in the pres-

ence of God, and with an utter forgetfulness of everything but the message, the warning and advice which he had to declare, and so it was when I met him at Otterbourn.

It was this impression of the man, in himself, which—I cannot but think—gave the immense power to Newman's sermons. Those who had seen and heard him, and very many who had only heard of him, were prepared to emphasise his words, and to accept them almost as inspired. Yet they were often very severe, and even likely to produce alarm in young minds. My sisters and I had a volume of the sermons given us by an Oxford friend of our brother William; but it was with the caution that there were two sermons which it was better for us not to read. The prohibition was ultimately taken off, but not till our friend had made up his mind that we were not likely to have our minds disturbed by the new teaching, which was extremely stern, and likely in some cases to be discouraging.

CHAPTER X.

AN ANXIOUS TIME.

It was in 1840 that I first published anything. I had finished the little book, *Stories on the Lord's Prayer*, and it struck me that if I sent it to the *Cottager's Monthly Visitor*, which was the only magazine I knew likely to accept such a contribution, it might be inserted. I asked William whether there could be any objection, and when he said "No," it was sent. Dr. Davy, Bishop of Peterborough, was the editor of the *Cottager's Monthly Visitor*, and I was curious to know whether he would object to any of the statements I had made. I heard nothing until the numbers came out, and then I found that some of the expressions about baptism were altered; but the stories were soon after reprinted again in their original form, as by my brother William's arrangement the little book was republished by Burns—then an English Churchman—but afterwards a Roman Catholic. I did not give my name, and no one knew anything about it, except my mother and sisters. I have often vexed myself since—thinking that I did not tell my father—but I had

a dread of any person talking to me about my writing, and I knew that if he was pleased he would not be able to keep himself from telling me so. I was reading the little book aloud to my mother one evening when he was in the room, and not being well was lying on the sofa half asleep, as I thought; but he listened, and I think was interested, for he asked me what I was reading. I forget exactly what answer I made, but it certainly was not that I was reading anything of my own, and so I lost the opportunity of giving him pleasure.

Our life was a good deal altered after our brothers married. There were more wills to be consulted, and there was a constant moving to and fro between Newport, Pidford, and Milbrooke.

Money difficulties, owing to the failure of two local banks, became more pressing about 1840. I looked on and understood something, but not all. As my father's uneasiness increased, his health began to fail. He was subject to attacks of gout, and the complaint was always hanging about him, and causing great depression so that he could not rally his energies to meet his difficulties hopefully. The worry was extreme and was increased by an accident that happened to my mother, by which her arm was dislocated. I went on writing *Amy Herbert* as well as I could at odd moments. The feeling that kept me to my work was the hope that, if great sorrow should be coming upon us, my writing might be an interest to my mother when she would not care for

anything else; and so it proved. After my father's death, the only reading, except the Bible, which, for weeks, she would listen to, was *Amy Herbert*.

About Easter my brothers were obliged to go back to Oxford, and then they were very anxious that my father should be moved there. The idea of his returning home was put aside, for it would only have been plunging him into the midst of anxieties which he was unequal to bear. William, as usual, came forward to take upon himself a large share of the burden of expense, but my father at first strongly objected to Oxford. Suddenly, however, and just as the question became more urgent, he changed his mind, and consented to go.

As my father grew worse, my mother and sisters joined us at Oxford. We remained there from Easter to the month of June. My father rallied a little occasionally, but we soon saw that there was very little hope of his ultimate recovery. The disease was suppressed gout, which caused the most miserable depression and weakness. Sometimes his mind wandered a little, and confused thoughts of business troubled him. He sent for me one Sunday morning as I was preparing to go to the early celebration of the Holy Communion at St. Peter's in the East, and began to talk to me in a vague way about a small legacy which had been left me, and of which I had been accustomed to receive the interest. He was earnest and excited in trying to make the little business clear to me, and I grew more and more

oppressed and sorrowful, for I felt that the end was drawing near; and when, an hour afterwards, I knelt at the altar in St. Peter's Church, it was with the conviction that a new life of anxiety—a life of which I was to bear the burden for others as well as for myself—was all but begun, and that only God could keep me from being crushed by it. I have scarcely ever gone into the same church since, without a remembrance of that morning—nor, I hope, without a sense of thankfulness for the sustaining Power which has never failed me.

CHAPTER XI.

AN EDUCATIONAL EFFORT.

My father died on the 25th of June, 1842. We returned to the Isle of Wight immediately, for it was the especial wish of my mother that my father should be buried at Newport. We—sisters—travelled with her by night for the sake of quietness. A strange and most dreary journey it was. An overpowering weight was upon us apart from our sorrow. We had long known what must come, but no one can tell beforehand what the reality of such trials will be. My brothers were kinder than can be told, but then it was voluntary kindness—not the protection which a child naturally claims from a parent. My mother seemed stunned. We reached Newport early in the morning. The change in the house was indescribable, and we knew that there must be worse changes behind. I went out into the garden after breakfast to a little room which, when we were children, had been a half summer-house, half play-room, and which had since been used for what we called a painting-room, where we could amuse ourselves as we pleased without fear of interruption. I was alone there

when my sister-in-law, Marianne, came to me. We began talking of the state of the family affairs.

One thing was certain. Some change in our establishment and mode of living must be made immediately. We calculated upon having £500 a year to live upon; and I had a vision of a little cottage in the country, and a life of extreme quietness. But my brothers had a different plan in view. They thought that it would be better for us at once to remove to Pidford.

Pidford as a residence had always been in idea our great aversion. The house was nearly square, lying very low, and with the ground rising in front so as to preclude a view—if there had been one. The only things to be seen from the front windows, besides the drive, the small lawn, and the fields and trees adjoining, were the tops of the carts and waggons which passed along the high road to Newport. The drawing-room and dining-room on each side of a little entrance hall were square and formal, and there were bedrooms of the same size above, except that a small dressing-room was taken out of them; whilst at the back there was a range of dark, dull rooms, looking out into a kind of farm-yard. One of these was fitted up as a sitting-room for my mother and ourselves. The others were the children's nurseries. There were large waste attics at the back, and two or three in the front. The latter my sisters were to occupy, and, with the family love of improvement and ornamentation, we soon set to work to

make them more picturesque than at first would have seemed possible. I chose a little room half-way up the front stairs, which I could have to myself, though with the uncomfortable proviso that whenever it should be needed for a visitor I was to move out of it, and migrate to a back attic.

Pidford being far from a church, and with no regular village near it, but only scattered cottages belonging to three different parishes, it seemed at first that there would be nothing for any one to do who lived there;—a great mistake as it proved, but, at the moment when the idea of making it our home was first suggested we were not inclined to be reasonable.

My father was buried at Newport. Many persons attended his funeral, and the shops in the town were closed. Every one, I think, felt what a friend they had lost. It was settled that we should go at once to a large house at Blackgang, called Southlands. It belonged to a friend, and was, I believe, lent to us. Preparations were to be made for us at Pidford, and the Newport establishment was to be broken up at once. The pain of leaving our early home was in a degree softened by this arrangement.

My mother rallied but little whilst we were at Blackgang, and after a time she grew anxious to be at Pidford. Perhaps she wished at once to try what her new life would be.

For ourselves there was much really to occupy us, for besides reading to my mother and cheering her,

we had Lucy's children to teach and a little work in looking after the few poor people who were in our neighbourhood. It struck me that a school was much needed. In those days education was not enforced by law, and as Pidford was on the borders of three parishes, there was no one clergyman to take the matter in hand, and the cottagers' children were left uninstructed. We had no money to spare, but it might be possible, I thought, to obtain help from our friends. The attempt I made was certainly of an original kind. I found out a man named Reynolds, who was a cripple, but who could read fairly well, and knew something of arithmetic. By promising him a very small sum weekly, he was induced to undertake the office of schoolmaster in his cottage, and, by small contributions from one and another, a few books and slates were provided. It was a most primitive affair, and I cannot say much for the instruction the children received. I heard Reynolds say to them one day, *l-a-u-g-h, law, t-e-r, ter—lawter!*

All the poor people around, however, were willing to send their children, and the little ones really did in the end learn to read, and write, and reckon, and were taken to church on Sundays. The parents were, for the most part, Dissenters, but more, I think, from necessity than choice. Many of them seldom saw a clergyman, and as they were too far from a church to attend the service regularly, they had built a chapel for themselves, and managed their religious affairs their own way. We did not attempt any

crusade against Dissent, but merely offered advantages in the way of instruction to those who would send their children to school and to church. In other respects we treated all alike. If we had remained at Pidford, we might have done more permanent good, but that was not to be.

If we had had a clergyman to help us I think we might have enjoyed the parish work; but, as it was, our efforts were unsatisfactory. Besides the little school for the children, we had a class of older boys at the house once a week for writing and arithmetic, and I think some girls came also at a different time, but I am not quite sure.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GENESIS OF *AMY HERBERT* AND *GERTRUDE*.

I WENT on writing *Amy Herbert* all this time. William had arranged to have the *Stories on the Lord's Prayer* published as a little book, for which Burns was to give me five pounds. This made Ellen speak to him about *Amy Herbert*. He looked at the first chapters, and liked them, and begged me to finish the story. Amy was originally intended to be only nine years old, but I found as I went on that she was too thoughtful for that age, and I made her a few years older. Emmerton Hall was an enlarged picture of Northcourt. I found it a great help to have a place I had seen before my eyes, for my power of word-painting was by no means great. There was no chapel indeed at Northcourt, but the exterior of the house resembles the description given of Emmerton. The story itself was the outcome of the influence which the Oxford movement had not only upon myself but upon all around me. But I had no delight in being an authoress. My objection to the name existed in full force, and when the little book—*Stories on the Lord's Prayer*—appeared, I

flattered myself that it would not be in good taste for any one to speak to me about it; and greatly surprised and disturbed I was, when one day at Pidford, an excellent friend, a clergyman, hoping to please me, gave me some praise for what I had written.

I was, I am afraid, far from courteous or seemingly grateful, not at all because I was not in my heart pleased, for of course I was; but praise given me to my face made me feel extremely awkward, and I have never conquered my dislike to it. Written praise was quite different, and is so still, but spoken words were and are trials. There is no special humility or modesty in such a dislike, it is merely a matter of shyness which many persons would think absurd. The test of humility is the spirit in which censure can be accepted, and I have just as much distaste to that as any other author or authoress can have.

We all met together as usual at Christmas, 1842, only it was at Pidford instead of Newport; but by this time a new source of anxiety had sprung up—Lucy's health. Though she had never been strong, we had not suspected the existence of any consumptive tendency. Now, however, she had a hard, harsh cough, for which we could not account.

Things went on very quietly through the spring of 1843. Then our uncle Edwards died suddenly. He had been for some time living at Speen, near Newbury, and we had lately seen but little of him; but his death was a shock, and we had only just recovered from it when Lucy's health became so much worse that it

was thought desirable again to try change and travelling. Henry planned a little summer tour in Wales, and it was arranged that I was to go as Lucy's companion, and very pleasant it would have been but for anxiety. We went to Capel Curig, and Llanberris, and Henry and I managed to get to the top of Snowdon, and then we went to Beddgelert, Festiniog, Bala and Welshpool, spending a day or two with an old gentleman who lived in a house which had formerly belonged to the Welsh princes, and boasted of a Banshee and other legendary and mysterious distinctions. My father and brothers had assisted him in some business matters, and once or twice he had stayed with us at Newport. A kindly disposed old gentleman he was, but we sisters were not partial to him, for he would kiss us when we went to bed, and to this we strongly objected.

The night of our arrival at his house he told us a ghastly story of a former occupant of the place, who in his grief at the loss of his first wife used to spend night after night in the vault which contained her coffin. The clergyman of the parish objected to this, and, at last, the coffin was removed, and put into a closet in the house, where it remained till the bereaved husband found a second wife who begged that the body of her predecessor might be restored to the vault. As our old friend ended this tale he put his face (a singularly plain face, surmounted by a brown wig) close to mine, and gave an unearthly groan, which sent me to my old-fashioned bedroom full of nervous

terror, not lessened when I found a large closet adjoining it, precisely fitted for the coffin of the first wife.

Our host's wish, undoubtedly, was to make us comfortable, but he was a widower, and had peculiar ideas of comfort, and when, on the next morning, I found it impossible to open the drawing-room window to give Lucy a little fresh air, and inquired of the housekeeper if she thought we might have it unfastened, her reply was, "No doubt we might, but her master had not opened the window since his wife died forty years ago!"

Our old friend's history, carried to its end, was a strange and very painful one. I do not remember all the details perfectly; I only know that after having gone on for many years striving to regain money from the hands of Chancery, he had just succeeded (a short time after our visit) when, as he was staying in the house of a nephew, he was found dead one morning, hanging in some way by a window. Whether he had committed suicide, or was murdered, or whether his death could possibly have been accidental, no one could determine. By the death of our old friend his nephew obtained some of the property, and there was a mysterious report of a bank note for a thousand pounds which was found in the possession of the housekeeper, hidden in the ticking of her mattress, and which, she said, had been given her by her master. My brother Henry fully believed that an inquiry would be made into the

affair, but the family apparently dreaded exposure. It was hushed up, and the mystery remains to be revealed when all secrets are known. To me it had a special interest, because our old friend had often said when staying with us that he wished I could marry his nephew.

As the winter went on we gave up all thought of returning to Pidford. The place was too cold and exposed for Lucy. What was to be done was a great difficulty. The question of climate being so important, we at length determined to take a house, either at Ventnor or Bonchurch, for my mother, my sisters, and myself, with the elder children. We went to every house which we thought might suit us, but were unsuccessful, till William, who happened to be staying with us for rest after overwork at Oxford, came back from a walk one day, and said he had found at Bonchurch precisely the place we needed. This was quite true. The house suited us, and we felt ourselves obliged to take it, but it was a most odd-looking place—a small, square house, without the shade of a verandah, standing in a tiny garden which sloped down to the road, with a wall at the bottom, low enough to allow the passers-by to look up and see everything we were doing; a wilderness at the back, partly weedy, partly cleared away, and resembling a disused coal-yard or stable-yard; and cabbages growing up the cliffs. These cliffs were in themselves very picturesque; the view from the front of the house was lovely, but the

aspect of the place was—to use the words of an old friend—"just like the garden of the sluggard described in the book of Proverbs". All we could say to cheer ourselves in the prospect of inhabiting it was, that it was more cheerful than Pidford.

Just before *Amy Herbert* was published, Lucy's little girl, named Marianne, was born—on 25th February, 1844. Lucy was able at the moment to take an interest in it, and I was excited myself in a way, but I was already beginning to feel the weight of that great pressure of pecuniary anxiety and personal responsibility, which has ever since crushed any feeling except that of momentary pleasure connected with the success of my books. I had finished *Amy Herbert* and begun *Gertrude* before we left Pidford, but I had little hope of making the latter a success. My sisters did not like it as well as *Amy Herbert*, and I had an impression that having written one story I had exhausted all my powers; and I quite smiled to myself when William one day said to me, that having begun writing tales I could go on and write some more. But the impulse came at last. The Oxford movement was just then in its full strength. Everyone seemed waking up to a sense of unfulfilled duties, and the question constantly discussed was, which had the primary claim, home, or church services, and works and charity? I heard it said that young ladies rushed about to visit the poor, and were constant at daily service, whilst they were neglectful of their parents. There

were, I knew, many misunderstandings on the part of the parents, and many inconsistencies on the part of the daughters, and a casual observation made by a friend of my own age at an evening party led me to think that she considered family duties of secondary importance.

Thus the story of *Gertrude* was suggested. There is nothing in the scenery or in the characters drawn from what was actually before me. The tale merely represents the tone of ordinary society, and the subjects in which persons were interested at that period. Churches were everywhere being restored, and new churches built—for the most part in utter ignorance of architectural rules. A gentleman once said to me, in reference to a well-built but hideously ugly church of his own planning, that the only thing to be done with such edifices was to burn them down. And his words were true of many others. It was this rage for church building which explains the prominence given to the subject in *Gertrude*. One thing I would notice as regards the description of the consecration service. There is no reference at the close to a celebration of the Holy Communion. When the tale was written such an addition to the consecration service would not, as a rule, have been thought of. Now, it would be deemed indispensable. So much higher is our idea of the importance of the sacramental rite. But this has been the growth of years.

We remained at Ventnor all the spring, and were busy in preparing to move into our new home at

Bonchurch, which we were already talking of improving. The entrance drive was to be made at the back—the road was to be shut out—the cliffs were to be cleared and planted, and a verandah was to be added to the house. We did not dream of doing so much at first (and I will not say that the alterations were wise), but the idea grew upon us. As a family we were never patient with ugliness, and of course we have suffered accordingly.

CHAPTER XIII.

LIFE AT BONCHURCH.

We moved into our Bonchurch house, then called Sea View, but now known as Ashcliff, in May, 1844. Lucy was then at Milbrooke, sinking gradually. Marianne nursed her, so did Ellen; her mother also came to her (her father, General Nedham, had died in the preceding winter). It was a strange and very trying time. The house at Bonchurch seemed so small that we fancied we could not fit ourselves into it. We knew scarcely any one, and I had an impression that we were going to live there with the nightingales in absolute retirement. So different our life has been from that fancy! I went to Milbrooke occasionally. My chief wish was to be useful to the children. I could do little or nothing in the way of nursing, for I was near-sighted and deficient in muscular strength, often very necessary in a sick-room; but the care of the children was quite within my powers. I wrote to Lucy from Bonchurch, telling her that I would always care for and love them, and look upon them as my special charge, and in answer to this she said to her mother that she

considered them my children, and that she could not say what a blessing it was. The same trust was expressed for all of us. She knew, as she said on another occasion, that they would be well taken care of, for she looked upon them as ours. I mention this because it shows how entirely the children became the one interest of our lives—taking the place with me of any desire for literary society, or any craving for literary fame—and giving us all a bitter heart-pang when, in after years, the idea of being parted from them was suggested to us.

In July dear Lucy grew much worse, and sank rapidly. Ellen and I were both at Milbrooke then. It was a very gradual and painless fading away, and full of mercies. The simple, trustful life had been the forerunner of a simple trustful death. (28th July, 1844.)

The well-known lines of Hood always come to my mind when I think of those last hours:—

We watched her breathing through the night—
  Her breathing soft and low—
As in her breast the wave of life
  Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
  So slowly moved about:
As we had lent her half our powers
  To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
  Our fears our hopes belied;
We thought her dying when she slept,
  And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came, dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

We went back to Bonchurch after that great sorrow. The children were given over to us, and they became our one object. My first visit to a foreign country was made about that time. I kept a journal, but its chief interest lies in the small differences between travelling as it was then and as it is now. We went by diligence from Havre to Paris, and came back by Abbeville, Amiens, and Calais—so that I saw a good deal in a short time. The chief use I made of the journey was long after, when, in writing *Ursula*, I needed a few incidents of foreign life for the plot of the story.

(29*th November*, 1881.)

This book has long been put aside. I had brought up our family history to the point where a private journal which I have kept for many years began, and then I left it. Now I would very briefly give the outline of events between 1844 and the present time, just noting that Robert lost his dearly loved wife, Marianne, in 1849, five years after Lucy's death, so that we then had two brothers widowers.

The condition of Church affairs at Bonchurch was the chief source of discomfort during the first years of our residence there. I have already spoken of the very small church accommodation, the Sunday services alternating with Shanklin, and the Holy

Communion being administered only four times a year. Week-day services were unheard of. The first time in the memory of that generation when there was a service on Ascension Day, it was held at the request of our family. We happened to have a clergyman staying with us, and we wrote to our rector, the Rev. Justly Hill (Archdeacon of Buckingham), who lived at Shanklin, and asked if he would allow this friend to officiate. The answer was "Yes, if we could undertake to let the parishioners know," and accordingly we sent round a notice to our neighbours, and from that time the service has never been omitted.

The village of Bonchurch, when we went to live in the place, consisted of two rows of thatched cottages, lovely to look at, but very uncomfortable to live in. The larger houses were East Dene, Wood Lynch, Under-rock, Orchardleigh, Undermount, and Coombe Wood (then called Uppermount), in the lower ground; and a few villas on the hill, besides a small hotel.

The population was much too large for the little old church, and the greater part of our family were obliged to go for a second service in the afternoon to St. Catherine's, then the only church at Ventnor. The long, hot walk, followed by a very long sermon, made it extremely difficult to keep awake. I often took a pin and pricked myself to quicken my attention, though to very little purpose. Still, looking back on the Pidford days, and the solitary walk

to Godshill, I was very thankful for the increase of church privileges, and there was a prospect of better things to come, for the idea of building a new church at Bonchurch was under discussion. Admiral (then Captain) Swinburne, of East Dene, took a large share in the plans, and, with other members of his family, contributed munificently towards carrying them out.

There was no regular school, but Mrs. White (Rosa Hill), to whom the greater part of the property in the parish belonged, held a small Sunday school at her own house, Wood Lynch.

A new schoolhouse was contemplated as well as a new church, and towards the fund of the school, the Rev. William Adams (author of the well-known allegories), my brother William, and myself, gave a joint contribution from the profits of a little book called *The Sketches*, which is now out of print. The idea of the book was that my sister Ellen should give a certain number of sketches (six, I think), and introduce into them any figures she might choose, and these sketches we were each to make suggestive of a short story. At the time we were all popular writers, and the little volume was successful. I think it brought us two hundred pounds. I was also able to publish two very small books containing four stories, *A Friend in Disguise*, *The Fate of a Favourite*, *Was it a Dream?* and *The New Churchyard*. They were sold to Mr. Burns, the publisher, for ten pounds, and the money was given for the purchase of church furniture. When Burns joined the Church of Rome,

I believe these little books passed into the hands of Mr. Masters, but I fancy they are all now out of print.

Admiral Swinburne's family gave the rest of the money required for the schoolhouse, and the school itself being thus on a private foundation, we were able to manage it our own way. We chose our own committee, and filled up the vacancies from our own friends, an arrangement which afterwards brought us into great trouble, as the subscribers who maintained the school expected to have a voice in the election of the committee.

Though a very small parish, Bonchurch was for some time in a chronic state of disturbance in regard to church matters. Our old rector at Shanklin had, in primitive days, left us very much to ourselves. He came over once on the Sunday, went through the service without music or singing of any kind, gave us a sermon, and went back again; but, as the residents increased in number, this was not sufficient. The first great change that was made was the introduction of singing. The rector's custom had been to sit down before going into the pulpit, and face the little congregation in the quaint old church, whilst, as he said, he rested. We looked at him. He looked at us. Stillness prevailed. Then he rose—(a very tall, large man—his figure made to appear still larger by his black gown)—and ascended the pulpit steps, preached his sermon, and the congregation departed.

But shortly after we came to Bonchurch, it was

suggested by a friend of ours, the Rev. George Leigh Cooke, vicar of Cubington, in Warwickshire, who was taking the Sunday duty for our rector, that it would be possible and desirable to introduce a hymn into the service. He made the proposition to me late on a Saturday afternoon. "Why don't you ladies sing?" was his sudden question. My reply naturally was that singing could not be introduced without the rector's permission. But the objection was quickly put aside. Mr. Cooke said he was going to Shanklin the next morning to preach for the rector; the subject should be mentioned; permission was certain. We had only to collect some young ladies, and tell them our intention. Miss Cooke was accustomed to train a choir—she would lead us—and the thing would be done. He was so earnest that I could not refuse to make the attempt, at least by trying to collect a few singers;—but time was short, and the utmost I could do was to arrange with a certain number of young people—personal friends—to meet the next day in the old church some time before the hour for afternoon service, and practise two Psalms, one of which was, if I remember rightly, the 100th Psalm, so as to be ready if needed. Miss Cooke was to meet us, and be our leader.

The hour fixed was two p.m., the service was at half-past two, but we had forgotten the custom of the old people in country parishes assembling and gossiping in the churchyard before the service began; and when we met according to appointment, a number of

persons were lingering about. We were all very shy, and at once gave up any attempt to practise beforehand, and went into the church. Mr. Cooke was to take the duty for the rector. Just before he appeared in the reading-desk, the old clerk, whose voice was the chief support of the congregation in the responses, came up to the great square pew in which we, trembling singers, were congregated, and, leaning over it, said in a very audible and impressive whisper, "The Archdeacon says *you* may sing". And we did sing, quaveringly, I am afraid, and untunably, but from that day music of some kind has always formed part of the Bonchurch service.

The new church was the matter of chief interest to us in those first days at our new home. The difficulties, and disagreements, and conflicting opinions respecting it, were, I imagine, only such as attend any undertaking of the kind. The questions which interested me most, had reference to the services which had for some time been voluntarily shared with the rector by a friend and near neighbour, the Rev. Randle Feilden, who was now to be our curate. Any service, besides one on a Sunday, had never been heard of. Even a recognition of Holy-week was not thought of until, in 1847, Dr. Coleridge, who happened to be staying at Bonchurch, obtained permission to have prayers every day. The weather, I remember, was lovely. The small congregation met in the old church almost like a family party, and on Good Friday the quietness of the solemn

service, with the antiquity of the little building in which it was held, and which had stood for nearly 800 years, and the beauty and repose of the scenery around—the trees, and rocks, and hills, and the sea sparkling in the sunshine—made an impression on me, as we came out of church, which I have never forgotten.

The express wish of some of the most influential persons in the parish was to have a celebration of the Holy Communion once a month—no one then dreamed of asking for more. One gentleman, however, was said to have "Scotch views," and he did not desire such a frequent service. Through a friend of my own, who was nearly connected with the family of the bishop (Dr. Sumner), I learned that the question of frequency had been discussed between the bishop and our rector, and that the bishop had expressed his opinion that a monthly celebration was desirable, but still I did not feel at all sure that the opinion would be attended to. One day the rector came from Shanklin to call on one of my brothers, who was staying with us. When he was gone, I asked if anything had been said about church matters, and especially what were our prospects as regarded the Holy Communion. The reply was to the effect that we were to be allowed a celebration every six weeks.

This seemed very hard upon us. We had agreed to subscribe for the curate's stipend upon certain conditions, and though this particular point had not

been especially mentioned, it was because it had been taken for granted. I determined in my own mind that I would not let the matter rest, and without delay I went to a friend, Lady Hampson (living at Cliff Den), whose name would, I knew, have weight with the rector, and begged her to write to him upon the subject. Writing myself was out of the question. Such absurd stories were going about as to my church principles and the probability of my becoming a Romanist—that whatever I said or did was likely to be misinterpreted, and do more harm than good.

After some consultation, a letter to the rector was written in Lady Hampson's name, stating our wishes and reminding him it had been agreed that the curate's stipend should be given upon certain conditions, and adding that the bishop, we knew, had expressed his approval of the monthly celebration of the Holy Communion. The following day I had a visit from Mr. Feilden. He had just returned from Shanklin. The letter had been received by the rector, who was much annoyed, and wished that the ladies of Bonchurch would not interfere in such matters. "Did I know anything about the letter?" "Oh, yes," I said; "I helped to write it." Mr. Feilden laughed, and so did I; and then we went on to discuss the matter—and in the end we had our way. I only mention the circumstance to show what the subjects were on which church conflicts in those days arose. Since that time a weekly celebration of the

Holy Communion has been gradually introduced at Bonchurch—and it is to be hoped that it may never again be discontinued.

The foundation-stone of the church was laid on the Festival of St. John the Baptist, by the Rev. William Adams; and the completed church was consecrated on the 13th of December, 1848. The advowson of the living was soon after purchased by a gentleman (Dr. Leeson), who was afraid of anything connected, however remotely, with the Oxford movement. When Archdeacon Hill died, the rectors who succeeded him, though good and earnest men, were suspicious of everything which had a decided Church tendency. The first rector, indeed, was more inclined to be cordial. He was an elderly man, and rather delicate, and when he took a lodging very near us we won his heart by sending him a loaf of home-made bread when he was ill, and upon the strength of that kindly overture on our part he forgave us for asking if there was to be service on Ascension Day, which I heard he looked upon as a suspicious inquiry—and we became excellent friends. He told us afterwards that he had been warned against us before he came into the parish.

The succeeding rectors were more decided in their antagonism to Church principles, and the misunderstandings and uncomfortable feelings which were the result, might, if told in detail, fill a small volume, but it is better to let them pass. They did form an

article in *Blackwood's Magazine*, written by our clever friend with the "Scotch views"; and at last, when there came an open split between the school committee and the rector, we had a scene in the drawing-room at East Dene which might have been useful to Charles Dickens, who occasionally stayed at Bonchurch with Mr. White. He had been present at the first school examination held in the temporary schoolroom—contrived out of Admiral Swinburne's coach-house. This was the only time I ever saw him, for we did not go into society, partly from inclination, and partly because society involved expense.

The position of the rector, on the occasion to which I refer, was most unfortunate. He stood alone—accused by the committee of introducing Dissenting books into the school library without their knowledge. The committee were equally accused by the rector of introducing books to which he objected. To whom the right of selection belonged was not clear. The dispute ended by the books disapproved of by both parties being withdrawn from the library and put aside; and the succeeding rector, finding it troublesome to keep them, and not knowing what to do with them—without saying a word to any one—burnt them. On that occasion I suffered, in the person of my books, in company with Bishop Ken and Jeremy Taylor, and I have always looked upon this *auto-da-fé* as the greatest honour that has ever been conferred upon me.

CHAPTER XIV.

LANETON PARSONAGE AND *MARGARET PERCIVAL.*

CHURCH matters and the troubles connected with the Newport business occupied our thoughts greatly for two or three years after we came to Bonchurch, but that which afterwards more particularly engrossed us as affecting our home interests was the prospect of Henry's second marriage, which came before us in 1847, the year before my dear mother's death.

My journal takes up the story at this time, and the extracts I have made from it will give a few details of the events following. But one remark I will make—the journal was written solely for personal interest. I have been a great reader, and at one time I made notes from various books, but they were for my own private use, and would be dry and heavy for any one else. I have never moved in literary society, and have seen very few celebrities—so that I have no anecdotes to relate. When I first had a name, stray persons coming to Bonchurch occasionally asked for an introduction, but I was much too shy and too conscious of my literary deficiencies to cultivate their acquaintance. Mrs.

Sarah Austin called upon me one day, just before our early dinner. She awed me greatly, as she led the conversation, whilst I said only what was absolutely necessary in reply; and when she took leave of me I felt as if I had been reading a long article in the *Quarterly Review*, and rushed away to my early dinner, and the society of my sisters, with a feeling of intense relief. Sir Charles Trevelyan also called —but there again I was quite unprepared to meet him on literary ground, and felt all the time he was talking that he had simply come to look at me and see what I was like. It was a curiosity which I knew would find nothing to satisfy it, as my brother (the Warden of New College) once said of me to a lady who made some inquiries about me, "My sister Elizabeth is not remarkable in any way," and I heartily endorsed the opinion.

Miss Fenwick, the friend of Sir Henry Taylor, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, was another person whom I am afraid I greatly disappointed. I was an intimate and dear friend of her niece (afterwards my sister-in-law—my brother Robert's second wife), and she once paid me a free and cordial visit; but, as I heard afterwards, she did not at all comprehend why I shrank into my shell as soon as she alluded to *Laneton Parsonage*, which had been recently published. It seemed to her naturally enough a very foolish sensitiveness. She had lived amongst literary people all her life. Criticism of one kind or another was her daily mental food; and as she was a very

clever woman, her opinion and appreciation were highly valued. That I should not seek her approval must have seemed unaccountable—but so it was; and she left Bonchurch without making any second attempt to break through the crust of my reserve.

The only way in which my journal could have the slightest public interest is that it gives occasional notices of the Church principles which were gaining ground in the country, and which influenced my own life. Otherwise those only would care to look at it who might have a personal interest in myself, and in the cares and disappointments connected with family interests and affections, which have filled my heart and occupied my time and thoughts far more than my writings have done.

Laneton Parsonage was begun after dear Lucy's death, and when we first took the entire charge of her children. The idea of connecting it with the Church Catechism had been originally suggested to me by Mrs. Sherwood's stories on the same subject, which in my childhood had been a great source of Sunday amusement; and there was a satisfaction in having a plan marked out beforehand, which might, in some degree, be a guide to me in carrying out my ideas as to events and characters. I was able in those days to do, what I certainly could not have done at a later period, write at odd times and in any place. I remember sitting down in what was then our little dining-room, to begin *Laneton Parsonage*, but finding myself in a state of absolute dulness, and looking

out upon the sea, longing for inspiration, and feeling quite helpless, when suddenly it occurred to me that Ruth should have a twin sister. The suggestion made everything clear. I cannot now say how, but it was really the key to all the events and lessons, which, according to the plan sketched in my mind, I knew I had in some way to bring into my story.

I imagine it must have been the possibility of the contrast of the two characters which assisted me, formed as they would be under precisely the same circumstances. The working out of the distinctive principles of their actions was likely, I knew, to be useful, and I hoped it would be easy. From that moment I went on cheerfully. That which principally touched myself in writing *Laneton Parsonage* was the affection of Lady Catherine Hyde for Alice, her adopted child. The interest of my life was at the time chiefly concentrated in Lucy's children. The feeling for them, which we all more or less shared, was not likely to be understood by the world generally, who knew nothing of their mother's charm, and the way in which they had been left to us almost as a legacy. By the outside world we were naturally regarded simply as aunts, undertaking a duty which could not be avoided; and it was a real relief to me to be able to express through Lady Catherine's affection for Alice, the love which lay deep in my own heart, but which I did not venture to bring forward openly, lest it should be regarded as exaggerated.

Laneton Parsonage was originally published in three separate parts successively—a very expensive and not very desirable way of bringing out a story. The first two parts had been published, when the Oxford Church movement received such a great and sudden check from the secessions to Rome that my brother William urged me to write something which would be the means of pointing out to young people the true claims of the English Church, and the grounds of our separation from Rome. This suggestion led me to delay the completion of *Laneton Parsonage*, and devote myself to *Margaret Percival*, which was actually written and published before the third part of *Laneton Parsonage* appeared. My dear mother was then failing rapidly in health.

Margaret Percival gave me much more trouble than my previous tales, and was by no means as successful. It produced an impression that I was favourably inclined towards the Church of Rome, because I did not abuse it; and as persons dreading Rome thought me too charitable, so persons tending towards it thought my arguments dry and unconvincing.

My one consolation, when criticised, was, and is, that the statement of the historical grounds on which the English Church rests were privately approved by a man whose learning and character had gained the respect and confidence of the most influential leaders of the moderate Church movement—the Rev. Samuel Rickards, rector of Stowlangtoft, Essex. He was

staying in Ventnor when the book came out, and gave me his thorough sympathy and approval. Mr. Rickards also advised me to write a little history of the early Church, which I afterwards did. He saw part of it, and liked it.

As regards the story of *Margaret Percival*, the outline of one of the chief characters was suggested by a picture which I happened to see when going over the house and grounds of Stoke, in Gloucestershire, a place belonging to the Duke of Beaufort. It was the full-length portrait of the first Duchess of Beaufort, taken when she was fourteen. Through her, I was told, Stoke came into the Beaufort family. She is represented standing in a garden, with a basket of flowers on her arm; her brother is by her side, and very like her, but not so handsome. The face of the girl is lovely and gentle in its expression, though it is said she was so proud that she would not allow her servants to turn their backs to her.

The picture haunted my memory, and came to my aid when I needed it. The fascination which the Countess Novera exercised over Margaret Percival had also been brought to my mind by an acquaintance with the only daughter of the first Earl of Yarborough, who at one time spent part of every year at Appuldurcombe Park.

Lord Yarborough (only a baron when he inherited the Isle of Wight property from his mother, a niece of Sir Richard Worsley) kept open house at certain seasons, and when I was a mere child I was greatly

attracted by my mother's description of the lovely, graceful, little motherless girl, about twelve years old, who came down to dessert after one of the great dinners at Appuldurcombe. As I grew older and really knew her I was able to appreciate myself the winning charm which beauty and the most perfect simplicity and refinement gave to a character so pure and noble, so benevolent, sympathetic and earnestly religious, that I may with truth say I have never met its like again. Miss Pelham, afterwards Lady Charlotte Copley, was only the germ developed in the Countess Novera. There was not the slightest resemblance in their lives and circumstances, and the chief use (if I may so call it) which I made of Lady Charlotte was by realising the influence which I saw she exercised over those who knew her. The incidents of the short visit to France belong to my first acquaintance with a foreign country, when I went with Robert and Marianne to Paris after dear Lucy's death.

The Earl's Daughter was also begun before my mother's death, and I read part of it to her, but she saw from the beginning that it was likely to be sad, and I think it rather oppressed her. *Margaret Percival* I read to her entirely, and also a portion of *Laneton Parsonage*, and I remember being obliged to assure her that Alice Lennox (in the latter tale) when taken ill would not die, she took such a vivid interest in the story—which was only completed after her death.

My writings had now become a pecuniary necessity

for the whole family. My mother fully recognised it, for she said to me one day that she would rather be dependent upon me than upon any one else. Not that my brothers failed in assisting us to the utmost of their power, but the business claims were still a perpetual anxiety, and the pressure upon us all was so great that any one who made or could make money was called upon, as a matter of course, to give it to the general fund. My mother knew very little of all these cares in detail. During the last year of her life, that which touched her and all of us most deeply was the prospect of Henry's second marriage. He was very lonely in London, where he was carrying on his business in connection with Newport; and Elizabeth Kittoe (whose father, Captain Kittoe, was dead, and whose mother was an old friend of my mother's) was likely to make him an excellent wife.

My mother's last illness and death, in 1848, followed soon after the first announcement of Henry's intended marriage. A more peaceful, blessed end to a holy life could not have been. She had suffered much a year or two previously, having fallen down and injured her leg. I was away at the time the accident happened, and when I returned home I found her much altered in many ways; but she had recovered wonderfully before this last illness, and even to the end her strength was wonderful. She did not keep to her bed for a single day, and died in her sleep, 20th May, 1848. My journal, which I had then begun to keep regularly, gives the history of those last days of trial and sorrow.

Rydal Mount.

Saturday, 19th August, 1848, *Oxford.*—A fortnight ago I went up to Henry's house for two days to see a dentist. I was very glad to get back to Oxford again. London is so overwhelming, and it rained, and I went about in cabs with the children, and made awkward blunders. Amongst other things, I had to arrange for Mary and Eleanor to have dancing lessons, and with this object I took them with me, and told the cabman to drive to Willis's rooms where I expected to find the dancing mistress, Madame Michaud. The man was evidently perplexed, and drove me first to a wrong place, then he went to another, and a thundering knock at a kind of portière was answered by a scarlet-plush and powdered footman, two others waiting behind, all eagerly bending towards me as if anxious to show me every honour. It was strange; but ignorant as I am of London and London ways, I did not exactly see why the grand Madame Michaud should not have plush and powdered footmen as well as any one else. I got out of the cab and entered a fair-

sized hall. The footman waited for my name; "I am wishing," I said, "to see Madame Michaud; I believe she has classes for dancing here". The look and gesture of the man and his companions, who had hurried up to him, were indescribable. "We give no dancing lessons here. This is the Duke of Cleveland's," and as I heard the words I rushed back to the cab in a fit of laughter, but with no little confusion, and gave my next order, "To the Charing-Cross Hospital".

An accident had happened the day before, for which Henry's cabman was responsible,—a little boy had been injured and taken to the hospital, and I wished to inquire how he was going on. It was raining hard. A crowd of men were at the door. I was told afterwards that they thought it was a "case," and were prepared to carry me. I felt painfully nervous, and only anxious to get away from the wondering gazers. Unable in my confusion to reckon, I put my purse into the cabman's hands and told him he must take his fare. And he did take it! What the sum was I never could quite make out, but there is no question that his morning's work had been advantageous. Once in the entrance I felt safe, and having paid my visit to the child, returned home with a most assured conviction which has never left me, that I was not made to go about London alone.

11*th December, Bonchurch.*—I must write to-day merely to mark the consecration of the new church. The world grows busier than ever with church

matters and school matters; and the Swinburnes gone, and things left to be done by any one who chooses. But the day has gone off extremely well, the weather beautiful, marvellous quite for December, so bright and calm and soft; at luncheon we sat with open windows, though for weeks before we had had rain. The church was very crowded—£95 collected. Afterwards I went down to the schoolroom, and the children had tea and cake; and played in the Sweep at East Dene, and were as happy as possible. It is very fatiguing work but we are most thankful to have a church and a school; and there is a prospect of a second service, and a very faint, a very distant hope of a curate. Things are improving, but I dread make-shifts. The Swinburnes being gone was a very sad blank. They were afraid to wait because of the weather, and they had to travel to Northumberland. As it happens they might have waited very well, but when people act for the best one must depend upon things turning out well.

7th April, 1849, *Easter Day.*—I remember saying last Easter Day that things seemed brighter, though I scarcely knew why. I can see *why* now, though we have gone through much since then, and that has passed from the earth which can never return—the "glory," as Wordsworth calls it, of one's childhood, which so peculiarly centred in my dear mother's love. But there is rest now The new church to-day was very nice. Certainly last year I should hardly have expected such a satisfactory arrangement

as to the services; one has a great deal to be thankful for,—perhaps, more than anything, that life has so few charms and so many interests. Added to writing and home duties it makes the world go at a railroad pace in the way of work, but it is better than idleness, and I am making my mind up to it. "Rest was not made for earth," the *Lyra Apostolica* says, and it consoles me.

(Written on my Lake expedition when Captain and Lady Jane Swinburne took me with them to the Lakes and Capheaton—a kindness not to be forgotten.)

8th September, Kirby Stephen.—We have left the Lakes, but I have such visions of blue water and grey rocks before my eyes, it seems as if they haunted me still. Certainly it is scenery much more beautiful than I could have supposed from what people say generally, and we had such glorious weather—quite wonderful for this country. I should very much have liked another day, but I shall live in the hope of seeing it all again some of these days. Our last day was given to our visit to Wordsworth, to whom I had a letter of introduction from Miss Fenwick.

I never felt anything like the uncomfortableness of expectation I had then, except when I have been going to a dentist. We all hated the intrusion, though Algernon was greatly interested at the thought of seeing the great poet; it was so intensely awkward, and so odious, going to see a person merely to say you have seen him. I did not enjoy the drive in the least, lovely though it was, and Lady Jane and I

could not decide which should go in first and introduce the others, as the introduction was mine, but the etiquette of precedence hers. When we got to Rydal Mount we found that the family were just finishing dinner, so the man-servant begged us to walk in the garden, and we found our way to the view in front looking to Windermere. Very lovely it was. The afternoon was cloudy, which was against it, but it must be exquisite in sunshine.

Presently the servant came out and suggested that we might, if we liked, go back to the house, and we were shown into what I concluded was the drawing-room—small, panelled with oak wainscotting, and the furniture yellow; a bookcase, with apparently some splendid books, a few pictures, and one or two casts, one of a child holding a shell to his ear; the other, Captain Swinburne fancied, might be the monument to Wordsworth's daughter. It was a reclining figure, modern evidently. I feel rather vexed with myself for not having looked about more, but I dislike feeling curious, even by myself. The room was dark—one of the windows blocked up by a sofa. We waited an immense time. Mrs. Wordsworth came at last—a very pleasing old lady, rather shy in manner, but so simple and kind, she put one quite at ease. Wordsworth, himself, came a few minutes after. He was much older and more feeble than I had expected, and I had a painful feeling of having intruded upon him.

I could almost say I am sorry I went, though, I dare-

say, by-and-by I shall be glad. We were all stiff and restrained, and talked at intervals—with fearful pauses—a little about the Lakes and the scenery, and Mr. Smith's family living near the Barrow Falls at Derwent Water, where we had been the day before; and we said how many people there were in the world of the name of Smith, and how they tried to vary the spelling. Wordsworth spoke of people's misusing the privilege of going there, and said some one had stolen a guttapercha cup which had been given to his sister by Miss Fenwick; and added, that although he could understand the wish to possess some memorial of a person whose writings had perhaps been read and admired, yet the act was unjustifiable. Somehow (I am afraid I am over-fastidious), but I wished the writings and the privilege had been kept in the background; and I wished too that it had not been so evidently a favour conferred on us to be admitted to him, and that there had been some apology, as in ordinary cases there must have been, for the length of time we had waited.

No one could, in the least, have mistaken the visit for a common one. One respects him so much, and his age makes him so venerable, that I quite hate myself for thinking of these things. And he was so kind, and so very nice to Algernon especially, at last, that I could have cried, as Algernon did, when we went away. He took us round his garden to see the views of Rydal and Windermere, and talked of a visit to the Isle of Wight, and told us of a person he had

seen there who was the original of the portrait in West's picture of the death of General Wolfe. It was fortunate for Wolfe, he said, that he died as he did, for he was wasting away with consumption, and could not have survived two months longer, though no one, I believe, was aware of his illness. Wolfe was a great admirer of Gray's "Elegy"; and as he was going down the river with his officers, previous to the storming of Montreal, he read the poem to them to while away the time, for it was then a new thing, just published. When he had finished he turned to them and said, "Gentlemen, I had rather have been the author of that poem, and have given utterance to the sentiments expressed in it, than I would enjoy all the honour which I believe awaits us in this expedition".

We went into the house again before we left Rydal Mount, and Wordsworth showed us the oak chest which has been in his family more than three hundred years, and has the name of William Wordsworth upon it; and he pointed out to us, very nicely and simply, the pictures of the Royal children, which had been sent him by the Queen's command, and seemed very anxious to show us everything that might interest us. There was a beautiful sketch of him by Haydon, and two busts—one of himself and one of Southey. The room was very simple, and, like the other, dark. I felt much more at ease at last. He would go with us to the gate. Lady Jane said what a pleasure it had been to bring Algernon, and how

he looked forward to it, as he was already acquainted with his writings. Wordsworth's answer was, "Yes, he supposed Algernon might have read 'We are Seven' and some other little things. There was nothing in his writings that would do the boy harm, and there were some things that might do him good." Some observation was made about Algernon's not forgetting his visit, and Wordsworth's words were, "he did not think Algernon would forget him". It was the tone more than the words which made the tears come to my eyes—it spoke so strongly of the certainty that they would not meet again on earth.

14th September, Capheaton (Sir John Swinburne's).—Very odd it is to be here! We came the day before yesterday, having slept at Carlisle. From Tebay to Penrith the road is interesting. Shap lies between the two places. It is a kind of watering-place—at least there is an hotel with a few houses something in the style of Llandrindod Wells. I fancy our family ancestors came from it. Sewell is a common name in Carlisle. We had a drive of fifteen miles the next day, passing by Swinburne Castle, from which the Swinburne family takes its name. The property was forfeited in Jacobite times. Lord Derwentwater's papers were hidden at Capheaton in the top of the house, and were found there. After luncheon yesterday we walked to the only hill in the neighbourhood, where in 1815 the Jacobites assembled at the instigation of the Swinburnes, and drank the health of the Pretender in a

bowl of punch, the bowl being formed by a large hollow in a rock. . . . Sir John is very tolerably well. He is eighty-six, and as active in mind and body as ever apparently. Capheaton House is a square ornamented stone building (date 1668) with wings added by Sir John. There are woods around it, but it does not command any view,—in fact, it is a place to be described but not sketched.

Sunday, 16th September.—We have been to church at Kirk Welpington, five miles off, necessitating the old family coach and post horses. A wretched place it was when we got there—cold, bare, and puritanical. The clergyman gave us an essay upon sects and opinions, and left out the letter "h" fearfully, and the clerk sang to the congregation. I have wished Sir John "good-night" and "good-bye" at the same time. I shall not see him to-morrow, and never again probably, but he does not allow a formal leave-taking. Yet he recognised that it was farewell, for he was especially kind in his manner, and said "God bless you," which one always values much from an old man. Nothing indeed can exceed the kindness which he and all the family have shown me. It has been a most interesting visit.

CHAPTER XV.

LITERARY WORK.

THE life which began after my mother's death was at first intensely dreary.

My visit to the Lakes, however, with the Swinburnes, and to Capheaton brought a little brightness to myself, but new troubles had arisen after Henry's marriage, which took place in the beginning of the year 1849. The financial arrangements of the family, as I have before said, were almost of necessity mixed up in a way which made it impossible to say where the burden of responsibility of expense lay. Every penny that I made went into the general account, and in this way we managed to get on, but not satisfactorily; and in consequence we were continually planning new arrangements, which involved the question where the children were to live, and how they were to be educated.

In 1851 I went abroad with some friends—Lady Hampson and her son and two daughters. Mr. Deane, a barrister and intimate friend of the Hampson family, was also of the party. We were absent about three months, and travelled through Germany,

Switzerland, the North of Italy and the Tyrol, returning by Paris. I published a *Journal of a Summer Tour* after my return, thinking it might be useful for the upper classes in the National Schools. But it was not a success; I lost about a hundred pounds by it. It was brought out in three parts, instead of one, which greatly added to the expense, and it neither suited the purpose for which it was intended, nor met the needs of any other class of readers. It was not thoughtful enough for the old, nor bright enough for the young, and so it fell to the ground. The tour was exceedingly interesting, and in a certain degree enjoyable; but I could not forget the important changes which were pending, and my mind was never really free from forebodings. It would have been infinitely better for me in all ways if I could have left the future in God's hands without disturbing fears, but the temptation to forecast sorrow has always been very great to me, and I do not think I have ever rightly striven against it.

It was about this time that I wrote the *Experience of Life*, and gave myself as the author, instead of having an editor. I had previously written two little histories of *Rome* and *Greece*, and brought out some definitely religious books. *Readings for Lent*, compiled from the writings of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, was the earliest; and *Passing Thoughts on Religion*, *Thoughts for the Age*, and *Thoughts for the Holy Week* followed later. As a rule I had always two

books of different kinds on hand. The first *History of Rome* was financially the most successful of all my books, and *Greece* also answered very well. They filled up a blank which at the time was generally felt.

But nothing I have written has ever been as really popular as *The Experience of Life*—probably because it is what its name denotes. It is indeed in no way a picture of my own family history, but the groundwork is constructed from facts which belong either to my own experience, or personal knowledge and observation. Having lived in a country town in my early days, I have drawn a general picture of the life belonging to it. Aunt Sarah's house is the exact description of my great-aunt Clarke's house and household. Her three old servants (Molly, Betty and Richard) were among my earliest friends. The delicacy of the home-made bread, the roast chicken and mashed potatoes, which the young niece so enjoyed, belong to the remembrance of the Saturday holidays which we sometimes spent at Aunt Clarke's. The verbena plant which was deemed so precious that no one was allowed to touch it—the fuchsia, which, being recently introduced into England, was regarded with similar reverence—are part of those early recollections. Many of the engravings in my own house came to us through Aunt Clarke, and among them is one from West's picture of the Death of Nelson, with the skeleton print by its side, which is especially mentioned in *The Experience of Life*.

Carsdale is really Newport. The description of the quaint old church, and of the impression made by the quiet, dreary, week-day services is exact; but beyond this there is nothing in the early part of the story which represents any special place or person, though the Blue School Charity, still existing, is the prototype of that which Lady Emily Rivers desired to set on foot.

Sarah's troubled mind was a record of my own personal feelings, but I had no Aunt Sarah to comfort me. The only other scenery (if I may so call it) in *The Experience of Life* which is real is found at the end of the story. The village of Leigh, in which Sarah spent her last days, is a real village, Avebury, in Wiltshire. "The great stones, relics of heathen worship, and the vast mound said to be the work of human hands," stand, and will stand probably for centuries to come, "to tell of the creed of the generations gone by." To me they must always speak of most kind friends who, in my almost yearly visits to them, gave me days of bright and hallowed rest in the midst of the anxieties of my life. Canon Meyrick's name is well known in the history of the English Church at the present day, and it is more than pleasant to me thus to record my gratitude for the loving sympathy of his rarely endowed mother, the bright companionship of his sisters, and the intense respect inspired by his brother James, the vicar of Avebury, and one of the most earnest and devoted of English clergymen at a time when the

Church generally had been roused to new and active life.

As regards the inferior events and persons of the story, they are merely shadows of realities. Mrs. Colston was drawn from a description, given me by a friend, of the criticisms and severe judgments of an aunt, who was a kind of oracle in her family; but Horatia Gray is an exception to these outline sketches from nature. Probably we all feel that some names have in themselves characters. Horatia was to me the symbol of abrupt manners and a scheming mind. I always said to myself that if I did use the name I would make the person who bore it very disagreeable; and I really think I succeeded.

Aunt Sarah herself, though shadowed out by Aunt Clarke's position in the family, is an imaginary character. The absolute trust and peace of her dying hours, and even the words in which she expressed her happiness, are, however, taken from my dear mother's similar confession of unswerving faith and joy—a confession which has again and again been a support to me in life, and which I would fain hand on to others tossed on "the waves of this troublesome world," and dreading lest faith and hope should be overwhelmed in the tempest.

I have now reached the year 1852, by which time I had taken my financial affairs into my own hands, and had come to the conclusion that pupils were a necessity. The idea had been suggested during my mother's lifetime, but she had always disliked it so

much that we shrank from urging it. In 1852, however, we all felt that there was no alternative, and the work began with one little girl, of an age to be a companion to our nieces, and then increased by degrees. For a long time we had only six pupils, and we never for a continuance had more than ten. Of this education period I can say nothing, except that experience has taught me many lessons. Although my principles of training, as expressed in a book called *Principles of Education*, which I published in 1865, have remained unaltered, I have found it desirable to make many changes in the mode of instruction to meet the requirements of the day. The details of life in the schoolroom could not be given without a reference to individuals, which would almost be a breach of confidence. Having but one pupil at first, we made her call us aunts, in order that she might feel herself to be on the free footing of our little nieces. The custom thus begun, as it were accidentally, was continued. It has made our pupils feel more at home with us than they might otherwise have done, but it would not be a practicable plan generally, and certainly could not be adopted where there were numbers to be kept in order.

At first Ellen and I undertook the teaching entirely, with the exception of French and German. Afterwards, we found it necessary to have extra masters, besides a governess, in the house. But although I do not attempt to describe the schoolroom life, I can say most sincerely that amongst our pupils we have

found, as time has gone on, our truest and most cherished friends, dear to us only one degree less than the nieces who have been the delight of our lives; always ready with sympathy, eager to help us in difficulties, widening the horizon of interest, so that we have lived in each other's lives, "rejoicing with them that rejoiced and weeping with them that wept". Life would have often been very dreary but for our pupils, though of course there have been many trials connected with them, many anxieties and disappointments, and (I can say for myself) very deep cause for self-reproach.

20*th June*, 1845, *Bonchurch*.—The Meyricks have been here to-day. Mr. Meyrick told Edwards there was no doubt that Newman is going over to Rome, which agrees but little with an observation made by Dr. Pusey to G. F. a short time since that no one could know how devoted a servant of the Church Newman was till after his death. The Church though may mean the Catholic or Universal Church, and so Rome may be included. It is a horrid, startling notion, but a sermon of Newman's I was reading to-night would be a great safeguard against being led into mischief by it. "Obedience, the remedy for religious perplexity." It is an immense comfort to have one's days so occupied as to leave little time for abstract thought. A recollection which gave me ease when the idea was first presented to me this afternoon was, that such men as Bishop Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor had lived and died in the English Church, and I could hardly wish to be wiser or better than they were.

24*th June*.—We had the Meyricks here again

yesterday. Mr. Meyrick in talking of Newman, said that the common report is that he has had doubts about going over to the Church of Rome for years; and that his constant prayer is that if he is not to go, he may die first. He has lately edited a book of Mr. Bowden's, and given a sketch of his life, in which he says that "Mr. Bowden died in full communion with the Church of Andrewes and Laud, and that none need wish for a holier or a happier death," which, as Mr. Meyrick remarked, does not sound like Romanism. It is certain, too, that he was instrumental in keeping back Mr. Thomas Meyrick from the Church of Rome for some time.

26*th June.*—We had quite an expedition yesterday. We were up at 5 A.M., or rather were called then, and left Bonchurch before 7 A.M., in a kind of rainy mist, to go to Southampton. Some foreign-looking people came on board the steamer, and seated themselves near us (two gentlemen and a lady). I caught a few words of their conversation and found out from their talking about "our steamers," that they must be Americans, and when they passed Netley Abbey, and wanted to know what it was, I spoke and told them, and some conversation followed between the lady and myself.

It was very agreeable meeting an American lady for the first time. She seemed struck with the prettiness and comfort of England and English cottages, charmed with Oxford, curious about the Queen, and surprised at the general ignorance as to

American civilisation; one lady having asked her if they had carpets and curtains, and another saying that she should not like to be in America because of the difficulties of travelling. The best book on America, she said, was Mr. Murray's. We parted at Cowes.

Monday, 30th June.—I have seen a good deal of the Americans, much more than I could possibly have anticipated. Friday was wet, and we heard nothing about them, but on Saturday morning as Henry and I were walking in the garden after breakfast, a strange gentleman appeared, whom I knew at once to be one of them. (He was a Mr. Parkes, a clergyman.)

I introduced him to Henry and my mother, and we walked round the garden, and up the cliff as every one does; and at last he asked me if I had written *Amy Herbert*, and told me that ten thousand copies had been circulated in America he knew, and there might be ten thousand more, for it had been published by two houses. The first publisher was what we should call a Dissenter, who thought it would do for a cheap novel. The other, I believe, purified it by expurging the part on baptism; but Mr. Parkes had settled just before he left America to superintend a new edition. We talked a little about the American Church, and Mr. Parkes seemed much pleased when I said what an interest we took in England in the Church in America. He said that it was quite reciprocal; that a fortnight after things had been said and done here, every one knew them there. He

spoke of Dr. Pusey, whom he had seen, and his humility and deep devotion, and, in fact, said what every one says; and then he alluded to Newman, and said that whatever his end might be, we still had the *Parochial Sermons;* and that he had seen him too, yet it was not seeing him, for though Newman was perfectly courteous and hospitable, there was no getting at him. Mr. Parkes was going to London, but the friends who were with him, Mr. and Mrs. Kip, stayed at Ventnor, and came to us for luncheon on Sunday (the Rev. W. Ingraham Kip was afterwards the first Bishop of California).

After church, Mr. Kip began upon Church matters, and talked a great deal, and very well. We spoke of slavery, but he seemed rather shy of the subject, though he allowed it was a great blot on the nation. He thought it possible that by-and-by there might be a separation of the Northern and Southern States; —the Ohio forming the great natural boundary. If they separated in peace, he said they might live in peace. Speaking of *The Tracts for the Times*, he said that an American clergyman had made the observation to him when they first came out, that he could not think why the English people made such a fuss about them, since they were quite the A B C of the Christian religion—doctrines which in the American Church were never doubted.

We parted after a walk in the landslip, at the bottom of Bonchurch Hill; they to go to church again and I to stay at home, for I could not manage

the evening service. They were to sail in a day or two. One thing more I remember. On mentioning the Dairyman's Daughter, Mr. Kip said that her chair was kept by some Tract Society in America, and that on certain days they had it brought out as a relic!

9th July.— . . . I have been obliged lately to write down some anti-Romanistic arguments for E.'s benefit, and it has made me bring out my own ideas more clearly. First, the great mistake of joining another Communion under the notion of becoming holier in consequence. Then the grievous folly it would be to leave the Church upon a *doubt* as to the line of the Apostolical Succession, such as is suggested by the often disproved "Nag's Head" story; for the succession being proved from past facts, must necessarily, like all historical questions, be open to the possibility of doubt, not that I have any doubt myself, the evidence in our favour is far too strong. Also the positive errors of Rome, and the negative errors of the English Church, and the absurdity of laying any very great stress upon the question of a Visible Head, since it is one which dates, after all, from some centuries after the Apostles; and, could it be proved, it would not affect our duty to remain where we are, unless we are clearly proved to be heretical or schismatical. Heretical we cannot be, for our creeds are the creeds of the Apostles and the early Church, and schismatical we cannot be, unless we entirely overlook the fact that the supremacy of Rome is a

comparatively modern innovation upon the rights of each separate National Church.

26th August.—We only went into Bristol yesterday shopping, and Emma had a drawing lesson in the morning. Her master, Mr. Holmes, gave us rather an amusing account of his first introduction to Hannah More, when—as a schoolboy—he trespassed on her grounds, from a strong desire to have a sketch of the house—though he dreaded the coachman and the dog. Then, being caught by Mrs. Patty More, and carried off to the house, and at length, after confessing his motive, being tortured by hearing—"Now, sir, you shall choose". But the choice turned out to be between cake and wine, and bread and cheese, and he was treated very kindly and afterwards invited to dinner, and had books given him. He said that Hannah More's manners were delightful. Several years after he took her a picture he had done, and she asked him if he would like to be introduced to Rowland Hill, and in consequence he went there—I rather think to dine. He was seized on by a very zealous Dissenter who came with Rowland Hill, and who tried to talk to him seriously, but he contrived notwithstanding to hear something of the conversation between Hannah More and Rowland Hill. It turned upon the doctrine of final assurance, and Rowland Hill ended it by saying—"I tell you what, Mrs. Hannah, I shall never believe I am in heaven till the gates are closed behind me".

2nd September, Bath, 20 *Camden Place* (*School*).—

Bath seems very natural, and I like being here of all things. We went to a new church on Sunday—St. Stephen's—built on the hill. The building is handsome as far as ornamental goes, but very defective in architecture. . . The vestry room is behind the altar, yet there is a considerable improvement comparing it with churches built some years ago. We were at Laura Chapel in the evening. I liked going there for old acquaintance sake, but the chapel itself really shocked me. I never before was alive to the monstrosities of a proprietary chapel of the kind—the pulpit reading desk and organ, all crowded together so as completely to hide the altar.

10*th September, Newnton Rectory, Wiltshire* (*The Rev. E. Estcourt's*).—We had a dinner party at Estcourt (House) yesterday. There was some good singing in the evening; I sat next Mr. W. Estcourt at dinner, and as usual we fell upon Church matters, and he surprised me by saying that he was anxious to try the scripture reader plan, and thought it might be the means of giving the people higher notions of the clergy, when they found that men who could do all which their Dissenting preachers do, yet were unable to perform the services of the Church. Dr. Hook wishes the order of deacons to be more clearly re-established, but an objection to this would be the introducing an inferior body of men into the Church—inferior in education and position—whether this is an objection, though, seems to some persons doubtful. Mrs. Estcourt told me the other day that

there is a chance of Newman's going to the Scotch Church.

16*th September*, 3 *Park Villas, Richmond.*—(Visit to a friend, Miss Hooper.) . . . The beauty of the river grows upon me every time I see it, but I do long so for clear sight. The charm to me about Richmond is, that it is a place where all classes seem to enjoy themselves. Sunday is the only day one grudges the general pleasure, and even for that there are many excuses to be made, at least for the people who are shut up all the week. Those most to blame are the persons who prevent them from having the Church holidays. . . . We had a wet day yesterday, and amused ourselves with reading aloud "The Life of Stephen Langton" in *The Lives of the English Saints.* (These lives were small biographies written by the more extreme members of the Oxford party.) It is well written and interesting, but I cannot go with it. Thomas à Becket is no saint to my mind, and I dislike the uncalled-for hits at the Reformation. One observation was manifestly unfair—that all the bad literature of the Middle Ages was eagerly seized on by the reformers (or rather, perhaps, at the reformation) from a feeling of sympathy with it, and from the satisfaction which was found in the discovery that the same customs of the Church which were then brought into ridicule had before been assailed by the worst persons of former days. This was the substance which may have a foundation of truth in it, but it was disagreeably put.

21*st October, Bonchurch.*—The Estcourts came to the hotel on Wednesday, and stayed there till Friday. Some of us went for a lovely walk yesterday by the sea cliffs to St. Lawrence. Mr. Edgar Estcourt (who was on the point of joining the Romish Church) was one of the party. He talked to me a little about William's novel *Hawkstone*, doubting the fact told me about the Jesuits, and wishing they could be tried in a court of justice; and afterwards he gave me an article about them in the *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, most laudatory of them, and of Ignatius Loyola, and very condemnatory of Luther. It had no effect upon me however. There is too much of the partisan style about it, and it is too bombastic, and contains few facts. The account of Paraguay and the Jesuit success there is marvellous, but here there are no attested facts, only a declaration that such things were. It is asserted by a Portuguese bishop, not a friend to the Order, that under the sway of the Jesuits no single mortal offence was committed against God from the beginning to the end of the year—meaning, I suppose, that no one did anything for which he could be put in prison.

28*th October.*—The Estcourts went away this afternoon. We have had as pleasant a week as we could have had under existing circumstances. Mr. Edgar Estcourt's case seems hopeless. He talks of the necessity of having a visible centre of unity, and how that *somehow* the Bishop of Rome came to be

regarded as that centre—and if he is satisfied with *that*—there is nothing more to be said, the case is no longer one for argument. On Thursday we had a picnicking and donkey-back expedition to St. Catherine's and the Hermitage. Ellen and I went to the house and were allowed to go round the garden. The place was looking lovely, but the walks were in bad order. I had some reminiscences on the downs, but there is something gone from me which no sight or sound seems able to bring back even for an instant. My heart never bounds now, and all I can enjoy is the *memory* of a feeling which to me is the most wonderful of all memories.

Mary Estcourt went with us for a walk last evening when it was getting dark, on the shore, over the wet sands and the shingle to a beautiful smooth piece of sand between Bonchurch and Ventnor where we could walk up and down delightfully. It was dreamy and sad, with the tide low, and the white cliffs standing out in a ghost-like manner, and the dark seaweed covered rocks forming a foreground; but if I never have boundings of heart now, neither have I depressions. Life seems too busy to give time for painful thought, and the words which are most often in my mind are those of last Sunday's Collect, "that we may cheerfully accomplish those things that Thou wouldest have done" They have been a comfort to me ever since.

I have been with my mother to-day to see Mr. Adams (the Rev. William Adams, author of *The*

Shadow of the Cross, *The Old Man's Home*, etc.). Poor Mr. Adams has been spending some miserable lonely evenings, doing nothing scarcely from seven to eleven—under the doctor's orders and from his own weakness—and not allowed to have tea.

11*th November*.—We are living a most quiet life now; and have eschewed all company. Fanny and Susan Meyrick came over one day from Shide and had luncheon, and stayed a long time, and, as usual, we got upon Newman and Romanism, though I had made a half resolution in my own mind that I would not discuss the subject. But I was induced to bring forward as many anti-Romish arguments as I could —and as they are not my own, there is no harm in giving them. Mr. James Meyrick is to have a curacy at Avebury in Wiltshire, and all the family are going there, which I am sorry for. We have had William's University sermon for the 5th November, which pleases me much. The historical question with Rome is evidently the only safe one, and if any one takes up the theory of development that is gone too. The case of the English Church is to me like that of an accused person before a judge, when the first maxim of our law is that we are to believe in innocence until guilt is proved. People seem to take up the opposite view now, and presuppose guilt, and of course begin the argument with a wrong bias.

Mr. Hatfield (afterwards Bishop of Wellington) has sent us the journal of the Bishop of New Zealand (Selwyn). There are hard names and hard facts in

it, but I am certain from my own feelings of interest, that a real Church feeling would be one of the very strongest bonds of union of which human beings are capable.

September, 1846. *The Manor House, Finchley* (*Rev. Charles Worsley's*).—I came here from Redbourne. Lady Hampson drove me in the pony carriage to St. Albans, and saw me safely into the coach which took me to Finchley. The change in my life is complete ; a boy's school ; the day cut up into bits by the necessary regularity. Being with old friends is very pleasant. Mrs. Worsley and I have had a long talk about various matters. She suits me more and more, and we agreed that if we were placed in any situation where we could work together, we should both like it, and might hope to succeed, as far as unity of taste and principle could ensure success. She quite feels with me about children's confessions being very undesirable ; and sees the danger of vanity even in other confession, especially with women.

After supper one evening, the curate came in. He is earnest and unpretending, but I should fancy crotchety. He advocates rather the idea of persons standing during the Church service—that is, standing and kneeling—the latter being the posture of rest. I should like to have him turned into a woman not in very strong health (and this is the rule, not the exception), and then see how he would like the custom. The only other visitor we have had is

another clergyman, Mr. Thomas—much smitten with William's *Christian Morals*. He is quite young, handsome and agreeable, and, I should think, not likely to be extreme. Candour and humility would probably be his safeguard, for he was quite free from the sharp criticising tone which marks the young men of the present day.

We went into London one day, and at Rolandi's I was tempted to buy an Ollendorff's Italian grammar, from which I intend to teach Mary, but I have rather repented since. It is a question whether any of these royal roads to learning are good. However, as I have it I must try it. Burns's is a dull shop decidedly. You see the same books time after time. It is very much like what that man-servant of ours said, when, a complaint being made that the cheese was not good, he was asked if there were any more cheese in the house—"Yes, sir, a large piece of the same". It is an inconvenient shop too. No place to sit down at, and the books crowded close to the door. I took up *Chollerton* (a Church tale) and skimmed parts through the uncut leaves and was not fascinated. It seemed strained and the fasting was brought forward prominently, and there seemed too much womanish humility. In one place the authoress cannot follow a young clergyman, by description, in his feelings, or intrude "into that sacred edifice which formerly a woman's foot was forbidden to profane". This is, if I remember rightly, the drift of the observation, and really my humility

cannot reach that depth. I think I *can* imagine something of what a clergyman might feel, and I should never consider it an intrusion to go whereever men go, taking them as men. Of course the altar is different; but there the distinction is not between men and women, but between God and man.

26*th November, Bonchurch.*—It is very strange to be at home again with all one's cares and business crowding upon one. The proof sheets of *Margaret Percival* come every day, which takes up my time, and Miss Ady, who is staying at Bonchurch with her aunts, comes each morning to give me German lessons. I am rather making progress which charms me. I read nothing scarcely, all my spare time being given to German exercises. Miss Martineau's *Tales on the Game Laws* I began, but they are so dull to me that I have scarcely patience to finish. The thing I like about them is their fairness. The rich people are not all wretches, though Miss Martineau's sympathies are evidently with the poor.

19*th December, Bonchurch.*—The weather has been intensely cold, and the frost is only just broken up, but we have had no snow. We have made acquaintance with Mrs. Harrison and the Misses Conolly —sisters of that poor Captain Conolly, who, with Colonel Stoddart, was taken prisoner by the Ameer of Bokhara, and is said to have been murdered; but the evidence seems very imperfect, and the family still live in hope. Anything like the expression of

agonised suspense in the face of one of the sisters I never saw. The Ameer has been known before to give out a false report that persons were dead, to suit his own purposes; and at the first interview with Dr. Wolff, who went to Bokhara to inquire into the matter, he would tell nothing. Afterwards, when he found that the English Government believed in the murder, he was more circumstantial—not of course as regarded the murder, but the fact that the prisoners were dead. Still there are reports of their being alive. One rumour is that when the Ameer heard of Dr. Wolff's mission he sent them to Samarcand. It is a horrible state of suspense for the two families. (My mother won the hearts of the Misses Conolly by her sympathy with them in their hope. Persons generally urged them to resign themselves to their loss.) Dr. Wolff, I believe, went again to Bokhara and became assured that the prisoners were actually dead, but I do not know whether the murder was proved. The Misses Conolly gave my mother a little chess table when they left Bonchurch. I always feel that it has a most tragic association.

Margaret Percival is out at last.

16*th February*, 1847 (*Ash Wednesday*).—Mr. Feilden gave us a service here to-day—quite a novelty! The clerk actually did not know where to find the proper prayers.

5*th March*.—I have said nothing of the great topic which every one thinks about and talks of—the

famine in Ireland. Lord John Russell said in Parliament, that it was a famine of the thirteenth century acting upon a population of the nineteenth, and the result is fearful beyond expression. We have done what we could, and sent money through private hands, but the utmost seems a mere nothing. The Government made a great mistake at the beginning—lending money upon the Irish estates; and then, instead of encouraging the proprietors to employ the people on their lands, employing them themselves upon unproductive public works. The mistake has been discovered, and in a degree remedied, but the suffering that has been, and exists still, is quite beyond ordinary description. One could scarcely bear to write some of the facts—they are so horrible. Mr. Wingfield, an Irish clergyman, said, when preaching at Bonchurch on Sunday, that it was calculated that nearly a third of the whole population would perish. There is to be a day of public fasting and humiliation, which one feels to be quite right.

First Sunday in February.—Report that I have become a Romanist, stated first in the *Church and State Gazette!* Two visits soon after from Mr. Coleman (the incumbent of Ventnor, and a very Low Churchman). Query—To inquire into my principles? I have begun a short story—written to illustrate six sketches of Ellen's. It is the result of an agreement between William, Mr. William Adams, and myself. Each is bound to write a tale, bringing in the sketches and the figures in them—the proceeds to be given to

the new Church, which is in contemplation here (at Bonchurch). I have also had dealings with Burns, about two tiny stories—*A Friend in Disguise*, and *The Fate of a Favourite*—the money to go to the Irish.

25th August, Avebury.—Fanny Meyrick and I have been to see Bowood to-day. A delicious day it was, sunshiny at intervals, with a blue mist over the distance. We stopped to see Lady Lansdowne's schoolhouse (not the school, for it was harvest time) —a pretty cottage, with a large pleasant room where boys and girls are educated together, and learn grammar and geography, and are clothed—a large number at least—by Lady Lansdowne. Derry Hill church also we saw. I remember being at Newnton when it was consecrated seven years ago. It has the grievous faults of a church of the time, but it is a step in improvement, and so far satisfactory, though it has a gallery, no middle aisle, and a miserable ceiling. Bowood is very lovely—like a great many other noblemen's places; with wood and water, and pretty peeps of the distant country—bright flowers, picturesque cows, and clean, aristocratic pigs—which I noticed especially, but we both agreed that the charm was more for us than for the owners. The house is a plain square building. We were not allowed to see the interior.

Saturday, 28th August.—My last day at Avebury. Possibly I may never be here again. It has been a calm, pleasant, very quiet time—disturbed only

by what Emma calls the shocks from the galvanic battery at home. I shall always have a bright, peaceful, and very grateful remembrance of the place, and my most kind friends. Especially, I shall think of one particular view at the end of the middle walk in the kitchen garden, where there is a little gate opening into the vicarage fields, and beyond them is seen the curious old Silbury Hill and the downs spreading away on each side. There are always soft blue mists over the hills, and now that the fields are bright and rich with the corn, the colouring is exquisite, and old Silbury stands up in the mist like a giant to guard the country.

31*st December*, *Bonchurch* (*New Year's Eve*).—Mr. Adams, William, and I, have finished and published our three t les for the benefit of the church here, and now I am busy with a *Child's Roman History*, and the third part of *Laneton Parsonage*. Also the second part of *Laneton* is published. I read a little now, and am almost afraid I am learning to do without reading. Napoleon's battles in Alison's history are so dreadfully dry, after one has been writing and working all day.

Wednesday, 27*th January*, 1848.—The day of Mr. Adams's funeral. It seems strange that one can write about it so calmly now. The loss seemed at first so great—but one has learnt to think of it more as the change is to him, and every one feels the same. I do not think any person could ever have excited more universal feeling. His child-like simplicity and holi-

ness are what all dwell upon. The last time I saw him at his own house was on the day before Christmas Day. Henry had brought down on Thursday the very first copy of *The Sketches*, and I took it to him in the morning. He seemed quite pleased to see it, and was not worried as I thought he would have been at the mistake in the binding up of the lithographs. We called on Christmas Day and heard he had an attack of hæmorrhage. I saw Miss Martin (his aunt), and she looked grave about it. His new allegory, *The King's Messenger*, had just come, and I brought back a copy for Georgy. Mr. Adams rallied from this attack, and I had one or two little notes from him—the last of all, giving me his opinion of *Laneton*, which I had lent him. The Saturday after, I fully meant to have gone and seen him, for I had met him on horseback one day in Ventnor, and just spoken—so that I knew he was much better.

I cannot remember what prevented me. I think it was merely the fancy that I had more pressing business elsewhere, and could see him another day. But the "other day" never came. He was seized with a second and worse attack, and his strength gave way. His family were sent for—and we all felt what must be, though there were times when we heard there was a faint prospect of his rallying again. He lingered for a week, getting weaker and weaker. On Monday, Miss Martin wrote us word that "he was quite aware that his short earthly course was nearly run, that he was quite calm and happy and could

listen to prayers read, and verses from the Psalms and the New Testament, which he took great delight in". His mind wandered a little, at the last, and about midnight he just ceased to breathe. Miss Martin's expression to my mother was that "his departure was perfect peace". The blank in the morning to us was indescribable. It seemed strange why it should be so. We kept on wondering why everything appeared so altered, when really our intercourse had been comparatively recent and slight. Serjeant Adams has asked Ellen to take two sketches —one of the landslip, the other of the churchyard from Winterbourne (the house in which Mr. Adams lived), to be put into the new edition of *The Old Man's Home*. His works are, I hear, to be sold for the benefit of charities. I dislike the word beautiful, generally, as applied to the human mind, but it often occurs to me when I think of Mr. Adams.

The morning that I heard of his death I was at the Nursery (the house next to our own—occupied by the children), having slept there. Georgy had lately received many little notes and messages from Mr. Adams, so that they seemed to be dear friends, though they had never met, and when I went downstairs he asked me whether I was not sorry for Mr. Adams. I replied, "No, I did not think I was". (It was not the feeling any one could really have.) The child understood immediately, and said, "It would be wrong to grieve for him". Afterwards in the course of the day, he called Ellen to him, and said, "Aunt

Ellen, I hope every one rejoices for Mr. Adams" The other night, too, he said to me, "Aunt Elizabeth, I may die to-night, and then I shall see Mr. Adams" The simple way in which a child realises such ideas is startling to one's mind.

CHAPTER XVI.

TEACHING AND LITERATURE.

THE determination arrived at in 1852 to take pupils involved a larger house. I had already purchased the leasehold of Ashcliff (or, as the house was then called, Sea View) to prevent its passing, with all the improvements we had made, into other hands, and thus had in a certain sense paid for these improvements twice over. The sum for which the original owner had built it was, I believe, £800. He was about to sell it over our heads for £1200 when I took upon myself to urge the purchase being made in my own name, the money being raised by an insurance on my life. But for this we should have been obliged to leave Bonchurch, and the course of our lives would have been greatly changed. It was the first time I had taken a perfectly independent step, but I have never repented it. The additional building, rendered necessary by having pupils in the house, was a great undertaking, but we were able to manage it by a mortgage, and we had advice and most kind help from friends, especially from Admiral Swinburne.

The plans were made and the building completed in a year.

Theoretically I dread and dislike having house property, and for many reasons it might have seemed better for persons situated as we were to have our money differently invested; but looking back I cannot see that we could have done otherwise than build. The landmarks of life seemed to point that way, and events have proved that the decision was wise. Our household was, from the time of Lucy's death, gradually increasing in number, and when the children first came to us we were obliged to take rooms for them in the next house, then a lodging-house, but now called Grey Cliff, where they lived an almost independent life under the care of their faithful nurse, Mary Goodwin. The youngest boy, George, a singularly precocious child, showed symptoms of consumption soon after they came to us. He was nursed by Goodwin with unceasing attention, but he died shortly before my mother, who felt his loss deeply, for he had been the one brightness of her widowed life, and she was devoted to him. Robert's three children also became our charge after his wife's death,—not indeed at once, for Emily went at first to her mother's relations, but as our house became more distinctly a house for education, with lessons, masters, etc., it was thought desirable that she should be sent to us, whilst her two brothers naturally looked upon our home as theirs in the holidays. Altogether, from first to last,

we had, more or less, the charge of nine nephews and nieces besides our pupils. We did our best to supply the loss which the children had suffered, but there are some circumstances to which one can only resign oneself without a hope of remedying them. "That which is crooked cannot be made straight" is a text which I have often and often repeated to myself to calm my mind when perplexed by the untoward events which, in my ignorance and blindness, I have longed but been unable to alter.

Katherine Ashton (1854) followed the *Experience of Life* in the order of publication. It has in many ways a reference to my own life. The opening scene of the school represents my surroundings when as a little girl I was Miss Crooke's pupil. The social grades and the small politics of the town of Rilworth were part of my own personal knowledge and observation. The "Green Dragon" in Newport, like the "Bear" in Rilworth, afforded a good-sized room for dancing, and the Union Ball describes the attempts made from time to time to bring all classes together, sometimes on the plea of a charitable object, and at others with a political purpose which naturally followed upon the extinction of close boroughs and the efforts of Parliamentary candidates to become popular. Mr. Ashton's bookseller's shop, in the centre of the High Street, is the same which existed in my young days, and is carried on at the present day; but Katherine Ashton herself does not belong to Newport. The character is real in spirit,

but imaginary in form. Long after Newport ceased to be my home, I learned by acquaintance with not one but several persons of Katherine's grade that it is possible to unite the most perfect refinement of mind with a simplicity of manner and taste which, though not evincing a knowledge of the forms of what is termed society, will render social intercourse delightful. In all these cases there was the instinctive good breeding which prevented intimacy from degenerating into pretentious familiarity. If we can only make the young people of the present day see that the primary characteristic of a "lady" in the truest sense of the title is that of courteously acknowledging the social claims of others, we need have no fear of the vulgarities which may at first sight appear inseparable from the spread of democratic principles.

Colonel Forbes also had in a certain sense a prototype; that is to say, he is drawn from observation of the power which a man—not by any means wilfully unkind, but only rather selfish and unsympathetic—has of tyrannising over his wife. Colonel Forbes has not in appearance, position and surroundings the least resemblance to his prototype; yet that the character is in the main true was shown to me strangely by the fact that the gentleman who gave me the idea of it came to me after he had read *Katherine Ashton* and owned that Colonel Forbes resembled himself, though no one else ever suggested the likeness. I feel, however, that he did himself considerable injustice by the acknowledgment. His

character was really only the germ of that which in Colonel Forbes was fully developed.

Cleve Hall in 1855 followed quickly upon *Katherine Ashton*, for writing was now a necessity. I began the story with the idea of making a change from simple domestic life to something more stirring and interesting to young people, and I own I was disappointed when I found that it was not as attractive as I had hoped it might be. There is more plot in it, more description and excitement, but I suppose it was not as much in my line, and as it told less of my own experience it was less natural.

The smuggling episode was suggested to me by the recollection of stories I had heard in my childhood as connected with the Isle of Wight. Smuggling cases were tried week by week in Newport, and I have a vivid remembrance of the sorrow of our cook, whose two brothers were on one occasion brought before the magistrates for this offence. Smuggling, however, was by no means deemed disreputable, and it was often connived at. The smugglers used frequently to cross the grounds where my uncle lived at Binstead, and no notice was taken of them; no one watched or traced their footsteps; and as a token of gratitude, a little keg of brandy was once left at the door of the house. My old governess, Miss Crooke, used to relate with great amusement an incident of her own experience connected with smuggling. She was one day sitting on the top of the cliffs at Niton. A party of smugglers landed, and she

watched them as they hid some kegs of brandy in the hollows of the rocks. Presently the captain of the coastguard came up, and entered into conversation. He told her that he was on the look-out for smugglers ; he knew that they were on the point of landing, and he was ready for them. Miss Crooke, the sternest of the stern, as regarded all matters of truth and honour, yet did not feel herself obliged at all to aid the authorities against the delinquents, and the coastguard captain, after a little time, went away without the slightest suspicion that the contraband goods were hidden within a stone's throw of him.

Ella's adventure on a hill above a lake, as described in *Cleve Hall*, was suggested to me by an expedition which I paid to Wast Water when I was staying with a great friend, Mrs. Hornby, at Dalton Hall, in Westmoreland. There is a sliding cliff above the lake at Wast Water, and it made me shudder to look at it, as I thought how terrible it would be to find oneself going down and, having nothing to which to cling, so as to arrest one's descent—and the feeling lingered with me long afterwards.

Ivors, which succeeded *Cleve Hall* in 1856, was my first attempt at a regular novel, or a story in which love is the essential interest. Up to the time when I wrote it, I had always tried to show that life could be happy, and its events of importance apart from marriage. I thought, and I think still, that marriage is a beginning, not an end—and that it is very misleading to young people to represent it in a different

light. But love is, of course, a very prominent factor in human existence, and having fairly well established my reputation as a writer of fiction without it, I thought that I might venture to introduce it, endeavouring, if possible, to avoid the usual ending—"and so they were married, and lived happily ever after". But I did not quite succeed. My own interest lay with Susan, whom I left unmarried; but my readers did not, I think, as a rule, feel with me.

She was "too good for human nature's daily food," and the wayward, contradictory Helen was the favourite. My own reply to such a choice would be —Which will you take to live with you?—but readers of novels do not enter into such a question, neither do persons outside family life. To them, clouds merely enhance the beauty of the sunshine—in fact, they scarcely recognise the sunshine without them; but when marriage is under consideration, the man who trusts his happiness to a variable, moody girl, thinking that her changes of humour will fascinate him as much by his fireside as in a ball-room, is not much wiser than he who, after watching Punch and Judy exhibited by a showman at a fair, bought the puppets, expecting that they would, without his efforts, amuse him in his own home. I could never have represented Helen as being happy in her married life, if she had not learnt self-discipline by suffering; and still my own interest and sympathy go to Susan in her calm unselfishness, and her quiet acceptance of the life-long pain of disappointed affection. The

small incidents of travel in the foreign journey through the Tyrol to Venice are taken from the tour which I made with Lady Hampson in 1851, and which presented themselves very opportunely for my purpose of changing the scene of the story from England to the Continent.

Ursula, which was published in 1858, is, as regards scenery, more entirely part of my early associations than any other of my tales—for Dene, Ursula's first home with her brother Roger, represents the Hermitage, where my happy holidays were so often spent.

Ursula's description of the place, its romantic charm, her delight in the peacock's beauty, and the joy of finding its dropped feathers, are all parts of my own memories. The sound of the peacock's harsh scream even now gives me pleasure because of those early associations. True also in description is the uncomfortable sense of change and pretension which came over Ursula when the place lost its primitive simplicity; and truer than all is the painful regret which rested in her mind when Dene was visited in after days; as it rests in mine at this moment when I think of the Hermitage as it was in my youth, and contrast it with what it afterwards became, and I saw it decayed and neglected. It has passed into better hands since, but it can never be again what it was to me in my young days. The verandah at Ashcliff, which is unlike any other in the neighbourhood, is copied from the Hermitage verandah now

taken down, and which (I was told as a child) was entirely the work of a very old country carpenter.

The places mentioned in the neighbourhood of Dene are those which are really near the Hermitage. Compton is Chale; Hatton is Niton; and Hove is Newport; Sandcombe is a farm know as Downcourt; and Longside another farm called Fairfields. Every description is in fact taken from reality. Compton Heath represents the scenery and the houses near Blackgang Chine. In my childhood there was no high road to Blackgang. Persons wishing to drive from Chale to Niton were obliged to follow the cart-track over St. Catherine's Down. Mrs. Weir's cottage, "The Heath," is one amongst the many small villas which have sprung up between Niton and Blackgang. I think it is now called "Ninestones". Stonecliffe is Southlands, a large house on the lower edge of the cliff.

Ursula's first evening at The Heath, when she was preparing for the arrival of Mrs. Weir, describes an experience of my own, when I was expecting and making preparation for my invalid sister-in-law, Marianne, who had taken the cottage for a few weeks. The old woman lying on a mattress on the bedroom floor, the wind pouring down upon her in gusts from the little fireplace, and howling, as only a wind at Blackgang can howl,—no milk in the house, and in consequence no comfortable provision for tea,—are, as people say, "scenes from life" So also the little incidents of the French journey, the

uncomfortable inn at Andely, and the description of the picturesque ruins of Château Gaillard, are derived from the events and scenes which were part of my own personal experience during my first visit to France with Robert and Marianne in 1844. Probably many persons may consider I have exaggerated the beauty of the view looking from the cliffs under St. Catherine's over the rocks and trees to the sea: but I speak of it in *Ursula* as it was to my young imagination, before villas and roads had intruded upon its quiet loveliness. The drive along the Undercliff from Niton to Bonchurch has great attractions still, but nothing can restore the lost charm which haunts my remembrance to this day as a prophecy of the beauty of a future and better world.

Wednesday in Easter Week, 3rd April, 1850.—I have finished the corrections of the *Earl's Daughter*, and am only waiting for William's approval to get it printed.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Judicial Committee, the Bishop of Exeter and Mr. Gorham, are in every one's mouth as subjects of conversation. There again one cannot realise that one lives in strange days, and that evil times may be coming upon us. We are going to Lady Elizabeth Pringle's this evening. So the world goes on, the same externally till the tale is told, and then one shall see what the object of all has been.

22nd June, Finchley.—Since I have been here (at Finchley) I have been up to London with Mrs. Worsley and her two girls, sight-seeing; first the water-colours, then the overland journey. I saw good drawings, and heard good music on an instrument which wonderfully resembles a brass band. It is called the harmonium.

29th June, Cubington (Warwickshire: the Rev.

G. Cooke's).—I came here on Tuesday and have lionised Coventry, and seen Kenilworth, and Guy's Cliff, and Warwick Castle, and experienced the greatest kindness from every one. It has been a great pleasure to see Miss Skene, daughter of the Mr. Skene to whom Walter Scott dedicated one of the cantos of "Marmion". Her singing is delightful. She sets *The Christian Year* to chants, and makes one understand it like a new book.

12*th August, Elford Rectory* (*Rev. Francis Paget's*).—I came here on the day of the great parish *fête*. There was a procession to the church, tea drinking, and games, and fireworks, and many visitors. The new hymn, "The Church's One Foundation," was sung. Mr. Robert Eden (afterwards Bishop of Moray and Ross) preached the sermon. It was all eminently successful. A few days after I arrived we went to Blithfield (Lord Bagot's—the Pagets are relations). There was only a family party, but it was very enjoyable. The house is Gothicised and battlemented, and built round a quadrangle. The grounds are well laid out with long broad walks, which I always delight in, under trees, and commanding views of wooded distance. I wandered about by myself to my heart's content. The Bagots must always have been loyal. I was shown the skull cap sent by Charles the First to Colonel Salisbury the day before his execution. In the time of the Pretender there was a stranger living in the house, who came late on a winter's

night, tapped at the window of a room where some of the ladies of the family were admitted, and asked to speak to Sir W. Bagot. The result was that he remained at Blithfield, lived in a room over the entrance gate, and was treated with peculiar distinction by Sir W. and Lady Bagot, who were extremely proud. He died in the house, and no one to this day has been able to guess his name.

I am to stay at Elford longer than I intended, for I want to see Mr. Bennett, of St. Paul's Knightsbridge, who is expected to-day. It is very restful. When I am in the parsonage garden I seem to have no consciousness of any other place or people but my much-valued host and his most fascinating wife, and the children. The fact of walking to the church every day through the garden of the Hall which adjoins the parsonage, strengthens the sense of isolation. I sit out of doors and read; and the river, the bright flowers, the green fields, and woods give me all I want in the way of home scenery. The church is beautiful, and everything thoroughly cared for. Elford is, in fact, a perfect specimen of an English parish.

19*th August, Cubington.*—I have been reading *Southey's Life;* it does me a great deal of good. His life in a book, and Mrs. Charles Worsley's in actuality, have helped me more than any sermon. Southey's hard work and pecuniary anxieties come home to me. His plodding on, longing to be free; and yet his perfect contentment. The *Earl's Daughter*

was published before I left home. I get heaps of praise, and am lionised till I am heart-sick and headachy.

Monday, 14*th August*, 1854 (*Elford*).—Ruskin's *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* which I have been reading, interest and please me immensely. They certainly are dogmatical. They are disfigured by exaggerated tirades against Romanism, but they are full of wonderful thought, and an intense feeling for truth, which must have an effect, one would think, upon those who read, or who have heard them. It is very interesting too, to watch the providential raising up of such a man at the time when there is also a resurrection of old principles—a theorist, not a practical man—if he did practise, his power would be lessened, he could never realise his own ideas,—not even a churchman in the strict sense of the word, and so exciting no prejudices against the architectural principles which are in fact the embodiment of those of the Church. Doubtless he has a great work to do, and even his defects are working for it, for so God vouchsafes to bring good out of evil. Nature as a guide, truth as a principle, these seem the key-notes of all he says and thinks.

16*th August, Beckley*.—"Heaviness may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning." I think we ought to treasure up and remember the gleams of joy which shoot across our mind much more than we do. Manning says that a man's true self is what he is in his best moments. One may hope it

is so, and certainly, I suppose our true existence—that for which we were created—is what we feel in our happiest moments. We forget very much what this can be. As we get into middle life care crushes us down, until we think that the very power of enjoyment is dead. But that which is a part of our being cannot die. It must be immortal as the soul, and God teaches us this at times. He restores to us, though but for an instant, the "thrill of joy, the glowing hope, the ecstacy of spring" of our childhood, doubtless to show us that they have been but taken from us for a while to be restored to us for ever. The gleaming of sunlight amongst trees, and the glimpses of deep blue sky amidst white clouds will bring it back occasionally. This has been a changing, flickering morning, not warm enough for sitting out of doors, but exquisitely bright and sunny at times within; and when the sun shone full into my room, and the sky and the white clouds were seen above the trees, it seemed as if—take but away the daily burden of anxiety—even at nine-and-thirty the heart would spring up rejoicing as eagerly as at nineteen, and perhaps far more deeply and thankfully.

14*th August*, 1855 (*Summer Holidays*), *Bordesley Hall, Worcestershire* (*Mr. Kynnersley's new home*).—Talking to Mr. Kynnersley has brought out, in a more definite form, a plan which has for years been work-

my mind for a training institution for private

esses, in connection, to a certain extent, with

's College, London. I wonder whether it will

ever come to anything. I have a superstitious feeling in my own mind that it may, because I foresee it must be supported by a large school, and I have always set my mind against large schools, and throughout my life I have been brought to do the very things against which I have been most bent. If I were free and alone, I should certainly try something of the kind.

Three things I remember amongst my girlish declarations. One, that women ought not to write books; another, that I would never be a useful aunt, for aunts, I felt, were put upon,—and if my brothers married they must take care of their own children; and a third, that I never would see, or rather never wished to see Bonchurch, after new houses had been built there, for it was a dream of beauty before, but then it must be spoilt.

19*th February*, 1856, *Bournemouth*.—I came here for a fortnight and have stayed a month. I have written a little, and read a good deal,—the second volume of *Sir Charles Metcalfe's Life*, which makes me look upon him as more of a hero than many whom Carlyle would worship; and *Hypatia* and two sermons of Dr. Pusey's against Germanism, and part of *Hero Worship*, to say nothing of pamphlets and magazines, and a diligent study of *The Times* every evening. *Hypatia* is a marvel; very painful because it gives such a miserable view of Christianity in those days. In striving to be true, the description seems as if it must be untrue, even by its own ac-

knowledgment. There must have been self-denial, and faith, and charity working beneath those turbulent outward scenes. Yet it gives one no sympathy with philosophy. Mrs. Meyrick and I both agree that *Pelagia* wins our affection much more than *Hypatia*. I doubt whether any religion or any principle but that of Christianity has solved the problem of love. Platonism certainly does not. Love is there, but as an abstraction, and because it cannot be grasped; weak human nature naturally falls into the contrary extreme. Christianity acknowledges the human element, but sanctifies it; for the union of husband and wife is typical of the union of Christ and the Church.

I was reading to-day the 5th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. I have taken this epistle for a particular study this Lent. It is a great favourite of mine. In so many ways it comes home to one's everyday trials and needs. Thinking of my birthday threw me back into the past, and the description of our Lord having been made perfect through suffering seemed to harmonise with the great lesson which I suppose we all learn as we go on in life, that whatever we have done, or said, or thought, which may be in any way of value (if one may use such an expression), is the fruit of suffering. It is *suffering* —labour, toil, inward struggle against outward trials —which stands forth prominently in the retrospect of the past. And so it must be doubtless to the end. The thought is very full of energy and life. It seems

to give me strength. If one must *suffer* in order to *do*, it seems that suffering, in whatever form it may come, will be easy to bear. And so too one learns the meaning of that mysterious truth told us in the verses which says that our Lord "offered up prayers and supplications" to Him who could "save Him from death," which were *heard*, and yet that He was made perfect through sufferings, and by them became "the Author of eternal salvation unto all them who obey Him". Doubtless such in their measure is the acceptance of our prayers against suffering. They are heard and answered, not by the removal of the trial, but by our own sanctification and the good of others. So let it be, if it should be the Will of God.

August, 1856.—The holidays came. I went away first, and stayed one day at Ashley,—and then went to Norwood by myself, or at least only with Goodwin. I wanted rest and quiet, and could not get it in any other way. The Crystal Palace was quite close, and I went there whenever I liked, and enjoyed it thoroughly. . . . The music was delicious. I used to sit and listen to it whilst Goodwin went about in the galleries examining the different stalls. After Norwood I went up to London and stayed at Dr. Oldham's and heard Jenny Lind in the "Creation," and was more enchanted even than I had expected to be; as much with her manner as with her voice. Her perfect simplicity is wonderful,—the way in which she can face that great audience

without a passing look of self-consciousness. Her voice is marvellous, but there are notes which are more surprising than pleasing. It seemed a great effort to bring them out. People say this is more the case now than it used to be. I was with Mrs. Praed (Winthrop) in Chester Square, also for a few days, and had the opportunity of hearing Jenny Lind a second time, for Mrs. Praed was ill and offered me her ticket for the very last concert. The same impression was made on me the second time as on the first. When Jenny Lind made her final curtsey I felt as if I must rush after her and tell her what I thought of her. I was really delighted to watch the full attention she gave to the other singers, and the heartiness with which she joined in the applause they received.

17*th April*, 1857, *Friday, Easter Week, Bonchurch.*—I meant to have written on Easter Day, but could not find time. I was called away as I wrote the last words to see Tennyson—*Mr.* Tennyson now, for he has become an acquaintance, almost a friend. Ellen did a drawing for him of the New Zealand Lake, named after him, and he came to thank her the other day with Dr. Mann. Then yesterday we dined at St. Lawrence with him, on the occasion of his brother's marriage with Miss Elwes (a cousin of Lady Charlotte Copley), who has been staying some little time with her sister, Mrs. West, at Lord Yarborough's cottage. This morning he came with Dr. Mann again to see another picture which Ellen has done,

a water-colour drawing from an engraving in Dr. Kane's book, of a huge natural pillar found in the Arctic regions and called Tennyson's Pillar. I think I could be fond of him; all his friends are. One sees that he is simple and warm-hearted, and unspoilt by the world. I like the shake of his hand especially. We had a very quiet unpretending party at St. Lawrence, only Mr. Hambrough and two clergymen besides ourselves. Mrs. Tennyson was there, and charms me more than he does. She is tall, and slight, and simple, and sensible, with something of a thoughtful melancholy about her which interests one much; not that it is anything approaching to unhappiness, and he seems quite devoted to her.

12*th May*.—We were expecting a farewell visit this evening from our American friends, who have been at the hotel all the winter—Bishop Doane's family. They have taken possession of the hearts of the Bonchurch people. (1891.—These friends soon became very dear, and have grown more and more precious as the years have rolled on. Mrs. Cleveland's home is at Nutwood near Boston. Since 1857 I have written to her regularly once a fortnight.) Mrs. Cleveland has been driving me about a good deal, and we have had immensely long talks. Some things she understands better than any one I ever met.

Tuesday Evening, 9*th June*.—I have just finished Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Miss Brontë*. Years ago, when *Jane Eyre* came out I read it. People said it was coarse, and I felt it was, but I felt also that the person

who wrote it was not necessarily coarse-minded, that the moral of the story was intended to be good; but that it failed in detail. The life is intensely, painfully interesting. A purer, more high-minded person it seems there could scarcely be, wonderfully gifted, and with a man's energy and power of will and passionate impulse; and yet gentle and womanly in all her ways, so as to be infinitely touching. Even her little niceties of dress, her want of physical health and strength, her morbid fears and superstition, come home to one as awakening sympathy; and her London visit, the shrinking from strange faces, and notoriety, are so entirely feminine. One thing it is impossible not to be struck with. Her life was sad in its circumstances,—very sad;—but it was sadder, so it seems, than it need have been. One asks why? Something there must have been in constitutional depression, but there seems a want in the religious element; not that she was not religious—very much the contrary. But religion with her was abstract belief not personal love—at least so it strikes me, and her life was sadly lonely. That love would have cheered her, and it does not seem to have presented itself to her.

28th June, Visit at the Leverets, Birmingham (*Mr. Kynnersley's*).—At dinner yesterday we talked of elections. Mr. Kynnersley said that in one instance he had hired twenty-five prize fighters from Birmingham to keep the peace;—pay, one guinea,—no spirits allowed,—an unlimited quantity of ginger beer

drunk. He himself had at one election been protected by a prize fighter. The people were so frightened at them—they slunk away. I have been to see the reformatory, the prison, and the hospital. The chaplain at the prison said, Birmingham was the best town in England in point of morality. (Commitals in Manchester were 1 in 88—in Birmingham 1 in 620 or some number very near it.) The average of all England is 1 in 500 and something.

Left Birmingham on Monday, 4th July—came to Raithby by Derby, Nottingham, Grantham, Boston, and Firsby—a tiring journey with innumerable changes, and a crowded omnibus as a finale, or not quite that, for Mr. Rawnsley's carriage met me at Spilsby. I saw Boston Church, whilst I waited there an hour. It has been beautifully restored. The place was hot, quiet, and misty,—and the country Cuyp-like. Near Spilsby it is pretty. The people talk with a most astonishing accent. Raithby is very pretty—not the house but the grounds, and Mrs. Rawnsley is a delightful hostess. Whilst I have been resting and enjoying myself, Mrs. Cleveland and all with her have nearly lost their lives at Perugia. The town threw off its allegiance to the Pope. The Swiss troops were sent to retake it, and plundered and massacred in a frightful manner. The story reached me at the Leverets. I can't be happy till they are out of Italy. No one can say that the same horrors may not be repeated any day. One is sadly unthankful. I find I dwell more on what they all went

through, than on their final escape. They are at Florence now.

Saturday, 9th July, Raithby Hall.—I have been to Somersby (Lincolnshire)—Tennyson's birthplace. This is quite his country, and every one knows him. Mr. Rawnsley's father was his guardian. I dined with Mr. and old Mrs. Rawnsley at Halton yesterday. We talked a good deal of Tennyson. His poetical talent showed itself early. He and his brother when quite young published a volume of poems at Louth, surreptitiously. Dr. Tennyson, the father, was a very strict man. He undertook to teach his boys, and the labour was so great to him that he used to rush away from them and go over to Halton, to Mr. Rawnsley, to refresh himself for a week at a time. Mr. Rawnsley's friendship began curiously. Dr. Tennyson took his boys to school, and coming back called on Mr. Rawnsley, then a young curate lately come into the neighbourhood. He was asked to stay and sleep, and they mutually liked each other, but did not become intimate till many months after; when one night Mr. Rawnsley's boy, an infant about three months old, was ill. At twelve o'clock at night Dr. Tennyson walked over a distance of seven miles, on a cold winter's night, to ask for him and give advice how he should be managed, because, as he said, he was the first child in the Rawnsley family, and they knew nothing about babies, whilst he had had eight boys. Of course this brought a friendly feeling, and it ended in Mr. Rawnsley being appointed guardian to young Tennyson.

Sunday, 19th February, 1860.—My forty-fifth birthday. I can only record the fact with great gratitude. The "tale" of one's life is very marvellous. The teaching that has enabled one, through God's grace, to teach others! how untrue any biography—even an autobiography—of any human being must be! How much there is which can never be told except to God, but on which all that is really life has depended. I have just returned from Bournemouth. It was most resting; the Church atmosphere indescribably soothing. Mrs. Meyrick is infirm, but wonderful in intellect and interest.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FOUNDING OF RADLEY COLLEGE.

I HAVE brought down our family history nearly to the year 1860, when my brother Edwards was made Warden of New College. Up to that date writing and teaching were my chief interests, whilst the College or Public School at Radley was my chief anxiety. I desire to speak upon this subject plainly, because I feel that much misapprehension has arisen in connection with it.

But I see that I have taken little or no notice of that which preceded it—the founding of St. Columba's in Ireland. This was my brother William's first interest of the kind. St. Columba's was begun in 1843 or '44 (I forget exactly which) in conjunction with Lord Adare (afterwards Earl of Dunraven), Mr. William Monsell (afterwards Lord Emly), and Dr. Todd of Trinity College, Dublin. The wish was at first to found by donation and subscription a school which might be the means of educating the sons of Irish gentlemen and especially those who were likely to take holy orders, so that they might teach the people, and preach to them in the

Irish language. It was thought that this would be a great means of reaching the hearts of the Irish population. But the idea was found to be impracticable, and St. Columba's then took the form of a Church Public School for Ireland, which it has since retained.

Unhappily before the College was placed on a firm foundation, William discovered that Lord Adare and Mr. Monsell were on the point of joining the Church of Rome. He was not at liberty to state his misgivings openly, and he therefore took the only step in his power and withdrew from the management of the College affairs. I believe he was severely judged for this at the time, as he was often during his life for acts which originated from the highest motives, but which the world did not understand.

He was not a man of business habits, and his delight in seeing beauty around him often showed itself in a way which caused him to be misjudged and thought careless of expense. As an instance of this, he was fond of collecting specimens of old furniture for his rooms at Exeter College, and at one time they were quite a show for visitors; but when, after leaving Oxford for a time in consequence of illness, he returned to it again, he chose some rooms over the gateway looking into Broad Street, and furnished them in the plainest way, because, as he said to me himself, he knew that his indulgence of a love for artistic surroundings had been censured as showing too much thought for personal gratifica-

tion, and therefore being a bad example for young men who were his pupils.

His religious earnestness was his attraction to me, and I know that it was equally felt by others—for his pupils were devoted to him, and many there were who owed to him the impressions which made their Oxford life the turning point of their characters for good. When once convinced of the truth of a principle, William carried it out without a thought of expediency or compromise ; but he belonged to no party, and from the beginning of the Oxford movement he kept himself independent of the great leaders, Mr. Newman, Dr. Pusey, and Mr. Keble. At the same time, he showed so much sympathy with the principles of the movement that they were, I fancy, constantly reckoning upon his support, and as constantly finding themselves—in an emergency—disappointed.

I have given this slight analysis of my brother William's character because both his virtues and his failings worked for the foundation of Radley. He had been disappointed in the efforts he had made for St. Columba's ; the undertaking had passed out of his hands by the force of circumstances, but the ideal of a Church College still remained in his mind —the one desire of his heart was to realise it, and the experience from which he had lately suffered led him to the conviction that, in order to be a success, Radley must be his own work, managed under his own direction, without any external help except the

money to be subscribed by the friends and supporters of the project.

The first Warden, Mr. Singleton, had been Warden of St. Columba's, but he left the College when my brother gave up his connection with it. He had many qualities in common with William; they were one in energy, and devotion, and adherence to Church principles, but practically they did not suit each other. William looked upon himself as the real head of the College, being in the position of founder; whilst Mr. Singleton, I imagine, considered himself a partner in the government.

After a short time Mr. Singleton resigned. I have reason to think that, from the beginning, the financial responsibility had not been clearly defined, and that misunderstanding was the result. Mr. Singleton thought himself in some way injured, and William felt hurt and disappointed.

The second Warden of Radley, the Rev. William Heathcote, was a most honourable, single-minded man, and a personal friend of our family, but I doubt if he was fitted for his position, which was one of great difficulty. My brother William's theory was that the boys were greatly influenced by outward beauty and refinement, and that if they were to imbibe the tastes, manners, and feelings of English gentlemen, they must have the surroundings of gentlemen in their school. Therefore, on principle, he desired to make Radley beautiful. But expense naturally accompanied beauty, and as the school,

though it excited a great deal of notice, was at first by no means full, the financial position became a source of constant anxiety, and by the time Mr. Heathcote gave it up, which he did after a comparatively short Wardenship, there was a debt of at least £4000 to be met.

With the debt of £4000 to begin with, the Radley finances were a grievous burden upon William's mind. His influence, indeed, worked in a most marked manner for the success of the school; he gave his whole heart to it, and its reputation increased in consequence; but the expenditure was always beyond the income.

It was at this time that my brother Robert, having given up the Newport business to his partners, went to Radley with the express object of taking the financial management off William's hands.[1]

And now I must go back to 1860, when Edwards, the youngest of my brothers, was made Warden of New College, and Janetta, my youngest sister, went to live with him there. That was before the Radley troubles began. We were anxious at the time about Annie (or Marianne), Henry's youngest girl, and our special pet, for she had been left to us as a baby of six months old. I spent five months in Italy and Germany,—months of most delightful rest and change, so far as my most kind friends could procure such blessings for me,—but Annie's increasing

[1] Then came the crisis, which led to Uncle William giving up the schools, Uncle Robert of course retiring with him.—E. L. S.

illness, and the rumours respecting Radley affairs, which reached me from time to time, cast a cloud over me, especially at the last, which prevented me from thoroughly realising the pleasure that was intended for me. Yet I can never cease to be grateful for the affection which planned and carried but such a scheme of enjoyment. We were in Italy at a most exciting time. Political events were our every-day interest. I was in Turin on the day of Count Cavour's funeral, and the feeling which the death of the great statesman aroused in the people could not fail to touch the hearts of strangers. Italian politics have of late years been to me second only to those of England. On my return I published *Impressions of Rome, Florence, and Turin*, a small volume which paid its way and had a temporary success.

1st December, 1864, *College Street, Winchester*.—I have been in London for a day with Jennie Crawford (sister of Mr. Frank Marion Crawford—the novelist), consulting Mr. Bowman about her eyes; and I have been at Oxford a few days, and now I am at Winchester with the Misses Yard—renewing the free pleasant life I used to lead with them. Mud, and mist, and gas, were my chief London impressions, and I was very thankful when Mr. Bowman said there was not much amiss with Jennie's eyes, and let us go. I went off to Oxford on business. On Friday there was a meeting in the theatre, the Bishop of Oxford in the chair; the object to increase the endowments of small livings in the diocese. D'Israeli spoke very eloquently, in a very declamatory style, gaining great applause; and if one could only have believed that *he felt* what he said he might have made an impression; but his object was too evidently political—the wish to put forth what his measures would be if he were Prime Minister. I

stayed till Tuesday at Oxford—and heard the Bishop again on Sunday at St. Peter's, an Advent sermon which brought in an appeal for the S.P.G.—earnest and thoughtful as the bishop's sermons always are, but too strained to be really impressive. One is perverse enough never to be affected by an evident *attempt* to touch the conscience or the heart, however real the speaker may be. Here I am leading a very quiet life; going to the cathedral; sitting by the fire, seeing visitors. Mrs. and Miss Yonge came in from Otterbourn this afternoon to call, and we go there to drink tea to-morrow. I have an idea that Miss Yonge might help me in an historical idea I have in my mind. (Two volumes of *Historical Selections* were the result of this idea. We hoped to have carried the work farther, but it was not sufficiently popular.) It is the assize week, and the judges are in the town. There was a sermon in the cathedral in consequence this evening, but it was very unimpressive. Yet Advent and the judgment might be made so much of. I cannot quite forget myself that the fate of so many rests on the trials of to-morrow, but then I am not used to assizes. The world generally seems to think it rather a merry time. I suppose it is excited by the view of the scarlet robes. They did look very well in the glorious old cathedral; and there was William Rufus lying in his coffin just before me, gone to his assize—and his tomb, only a sight of curiosity for antiquarian visitors. So things pass and appear to

become nothing; but the tremendous reality which lies beneath!

28th January.—I am reading *French Essays on Literature*—so clever they are! Charles de Remusat describes the French of the eighteenth century as "Des gens qui ne lisaient qu'afin de pouvoir parler". Could anything be more apt? That journey to Dewlish has left a lasting impression on my mind. It was a piteous day, bitterly cold, snow falling. I found myself at Ryde in a doubtful state of mind. Should I cross to Portsmouth, or turn back and give up my visit? (In those days we went down Ryde pier in bath chairs.) I took a chair—got to the end of the pier—still doubtful. The chairman came forward to assist me out of the chair—I hesitated; first I would go, then I would not. Keen was the wind, fast fell the snow. "Bless the woman," exclaimed the man as he stood shivering, "doesn't she know her own mind!" It was the first time in my life that I had ever realised my position as merely a *woman*—one of a crowd. I came to my senses at once, went on board the steamer, and found my way safely to my journey's end.

18*th May*, 1866, *College Street, Winchester.*—Staying with the Misses Yard. I would just note that it is the day of Mr. Keble's funeral, and that he died on the Thursday before Easter Sunday. The world will know all about it. Such a man cannot pass away unnoticed. Mrs. Keble outlived her husband just long enough to arrange all that needed arrange-

ment. She was thankful that he was taken first, and for herself she knew that they could not long be parted. The story of their end is contained in the words, "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided". Their two funeral days have been exceptional in loveliness—sunny, hopeful, brilliant, with the fresh green of spring—just the days which suited the associations of *The Christian Year*.

It was especially brought home to me to-day, when I went to call on Mrs. Moberly (wife of the headmaster of Winchester College, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury); she could speak of nothing else. This is the last evening of my little holiday.

25th July, 1866, *The Lodge (afterwards called L'Hyvreuse), Cambridge Park, Guernsey.*—I am sitting in a queer little dining-room, opposite the kitchen—a brick passage between. Outside a wilderness of scarlet geraniums, fuchsias, strawberries, cabbages, roses; tangled walks between. Above is a drawing-room about the same size, with a recess newly built—furniture like the garden, a mixture of art and nature, with wood-carving and pictures, chairs and sofas, very tasteful, cool, inviting, and home-like. There is another room close to the drawing-room, which Mrs. Clarke calls her work-room. From the window of my little bed-room I look out over the garden to a most glorious blue sea. Sark—misty, rugged, and pencilled with delicate shadows, in the distance; beyond, a line of the coast of France—in

the foreground the harbour, shut in by granite walls; one arm stretched out to Castle Cornet, which is a fortress, once standing alone, but now joined to the mainland. It is very warm, very bright—the impression I have of the whole place is that of *colour*—the island was so bright with gold and green, and the sea such an indescribable blue, when we came in this morning about twelve o'clock, after a remarkably good passage of six hours.

1*st August, Guernsey.*—I am just returned from Sark. I went in the steamer, which does not go every day, and returned by the cutter, a kind of Ryde wherry. Started at 8.30—wind dead against us—a passage of four hours and a half, and very rough. My face is scorched quite red, and I have been asleep half the afternoon, trying to recover from the fatigue of the last two days. Yet it was quite worth the voyage. Sark is a marvellous place. Fancy Dunnose in perpendicular granite, with huge masses of cliff separated from the main portion—the sea dashing between. Other rocks—battlemented, jagged, precipitous, scattered along the coast, which is formed into deep bays by cliffs and far-stretching promontories. At the summit of the cliffs there is short green turf, fern and gorse. This is one side of the island. On the other the cliffs are nearly as precipitous, only instead of Dunnose you must imagine the slope of St. Boniface Down terminating in low cliffs, the blue sea washing its base—Guernsey, Jersey, Herm, Jethou, and a long line of the coast of

France stretching away in the distance are seen on all sides.

The island is in fact a tableland. It is all but inaccessible. The *Creux*, which is the little harbour at which we landed, is shut in by granite cliffs, and the island is entered through a *tunnel*. The Misses Aplin had lodgings in a most primitive little hotel, but everything was very clean and comfortable. I went down into an apparently inaccessible cave the first evening, or rather afternoon—returned and rested, and went out again in another direction. The next day, yesterday, we had our dinner out of doors, and walked first to one side of the island, then to the other, scrambling along the side of the steep slopes—very slippery they were—and looking down upon the most exquisite sea; then dining by the edge of a fearful hollow, and afterwards wandering off to a high promontory, narrowed into a mere ridge at the summit, and shelving down on each side into a tremendous ravine with the sea at the extremity. The wind was too high to admit of our going along the top, so we made our way through narrow lanes, by the primitive parsonage, and most puritanical little church, to the *Seigneurie*, the only gentleman's house in the island. Mr. Collings is the *Seigneur*, and keeps up a regular feudal dominion. He has lovely grounds, cultivated and brilliant, the only pretty thing in the interior. Mrs. Collings met us. She was going to dinner, so we went to the Port de Moulin, another bay, with mighty granite cliffs

inexpressibly grand. The sea nearly caught us, indeed quite caught us, as we were scrambling through an arched rock. There was no danger, but, to save my best boots I took them off, and waded through the water to the great damage, or rather suffering of my poor feet, the granite pebbles being anything but agreeable.

The great need of the island is *ponies*. There is nothing to take one about, and as the scenery is all at the edge, one has to walk through long narrow lanes, leading across the island, in order to get from one fine point to another. The scrambling is really alarming at first. You stand at the top of these almost perpendicular cliffs, and see scarcely a trace of a path, and on you go feeling that the least false step would precipitate you to the bottom, and when at length you reach the base, the rocks are so scattered, and so huge, that it seems a marvel that you can make your way amongst them without breaking your leg. But worse than the rocks is the slippery grass. *That* really did frighten me. However, I am thankful to say I escaped all dangers, and very glad I am to have been. The air of the island is certainly more softly exhilarating than anything I ever felt. From the window of this room I can see over the harbour, and Castle Cornet, and the sea to the long line of the Sark cliffs, and trace just where the Great Sark ends, and Little Sark begins—Little Sark being not a separate island, but half an island, joined to the other half by a mighty cliff, called the

Coupée, about three hundred feet high and six or seven feet broad.

6th August, Guernsey.—I have been for a long drive to-day with the Misses Aplin to Plainmont—a Guernsey Freshwater—at the other end of the island; —and have an impression of granite rocks, tossing sea, a gale of wind, and a strange weird old cottage, made memorable by Victor Hugo's description of it in his last novel, *Les Travailleurs de la mer*. If this letter should go to Janetta, tell her that I have seen the *Maison Visionnée* at Plainmont, and the Hanois Rocks; she will be interested—so would you be if you had read the book.

16th August, Cambridge Park.—I am at Guernsey again, as you will see. I came back yesterday. My Jersey visit was very pleasant. The island is lovely, the most home-like, wooded, delicious little place possible, but I would not live there; it is too far away. All one's wandering thoughts go to France, when one is there. England seems at the Antipodes. There is an unnatural fascination in looking for the spire of Coutances, instead of the spire of Chichester Cathedral. It was a quiet middle-aged atmosphere I lived in there. Nothing could exceed the kindness shown me. We drove every day. Saturday we went to St. Helier's. Strangely and sadly it was the very day there had been an execution there; the rarest of all events in Jersey. It was, of course, all over before we went, but it was horrible to be so near.

16*th August, Guernsey.*—Went over Victor Hugo's house with Dora and Miss C. Carey. House furnished with drugget—peculiar in many ways. In the dining-room tiles round the walls. Chair with chain across it. No one may sit in it because it is reserved for Victor Hugo's ancestors. The date fifteen hundred and something. At the top of the house is a space covered in with glass, like the room set apart by photographers. Beautiful view of the fort, cliff, Castle Cornet, Sark, and sea. Table at which Victor Hugo writes. Two drawing-rooms —*Salon Rouge, Salon Bleu*—filled with curiosities. Belt with jewels which once belonged to Matthias, King of Hungary. Panels worked in gold and beading; belonged to Christina of Sweden. Table inlaid, representing the four elements; belonged to Charles II. of England. A table in the inner room —a kind of Japan and *papier maché*—which belonged to Henry II. of France. A conservatory opening out of the *Salon*. Altogether, French, dark, dirty, picturesque. The old woman who showed us over it was deeply engaged in a conflict with *les papillons* (otherwise, I suppose, moths), and no wonder.

11*th September, Ashcliff.*—The wedding day of our assistant teacher at the Bonchurch National School. The breakfast was given by us. I note the event especially as the end of that of which I saw the beginning when the Bonchurch School was started in 1848; for Miss Cowan, our old mistress, is giving

up her position. We had a parish tea on Friday last, and gave her a purse with £161. She was going away with almost nothing; her salary had been so small she could not save out of it. I begged for her and represented the case, and this is the result. It has been most satisfactory. Again and again I think of the words, "But saw I never the righteous forsaken". Six years ago, when I went to Rome, I believed that both the mistress and teacher would be unjustly dismissed, and sent to seek their home elsewhere as they could. I desire to be thankful for what has been effected.

The Ventnor Railway was opened yesterday, and there were grand illuminations; but underneath the excitement which these changes bring, my heart aches with the news from Rome. Dear Jennie Crawford (once my pupil) has died of bronchitis and fever. There is another added to the number of those whom I think of as waiting to greet me when I enter another world; but the world is sad and empty without them.

5th January, 1867.—Dr. Martin is dead. The loss comes home to one singularly. He was the man who first practically brought the Undercliff into notice for its climate, and he has been mixed up with all our trials of sickness and death since we came to Bonchurch. Intense cold, and wind, now that a thaw has begun, suit well with the gloom that hangs over the place. These losses make me think of the lines on a so-called

RUSSIAN PROVERB.

Two hands upon the breast,
And labour's done;
Two pale feet crossed in rest,
The race is run;
Two eyes with coin-weights shut,
And all tears cease;
Two lips where grief is mute,
And wrath at peace.
So pray we oftentimes, mourning our lot,
God, in His kindness, answereth not.

Two hands to work addrest,
Aye for His praise;
Two feet that never rest,
Walking His Ways;
Two eyes that look above,
Still through all tears;
Two lips that breathe but love,
Never more fears.
So cry we afterwards, low on our knees,
Pardon those erring prayers! Father! hear these.

Christmas Day, 1867.—Nothing very particular has been happening, and nothing is in prospect, except the goings and comings of pupils. I have had constant work, but I am quite satisfied to have it. It is work for Christ, and so it brings happiness.

The world swarms with rationalistic books, but though they are at times startling and painful, the more one thinks, the more one feels the enormous preponderance of probability on the side of belief, and, as Butler shows, probability is the guide of life. If we had absolute demonstrative certainty there

would be no room for faith. The great weakness of rationalism is that from its very nature it cannot recognise the inward evidence of Christianity, gathered from its effect on the character, and the comfort and peace which it bestows; and which certainly ought to be taken into account when we are judging of its truth. If it had professed to give comfort, and to convert men from sin, and to purify the heart and affections, and had failed to do so, the failure would at once have been seized upon as a conclusive argument against it. Success therefore must be accepted as evidence on the contrary side, and no one can dare to say that Christianity received into the heart in its simplicity and perfection is not both holiness and peace.

Saturday, 29th February, 1868, *New College.*—Came here on Thursday. Yesterday heard Mr. Liddon at St. Mary's in the evening—a wonderful sermon on the responsibilities of revelation—addressed to the indifferent, the antagonistic, and the unbelieving. The appeal to the indifferent was magnificent.

Sunday.—Sermon from Dr. Pusey on the last judgment—an assize sermon—very striking, but stern. Some would have said there was no preaching of the Gospel in it. Sermon in the evening—Mr. Liddon—text "Honour all men";—the reason given why men should be honoured, as being made in the image of God, and redeemed by Christ Who has taken our nature into union with His own Deity.

A very interesting sermon, but not so much so as the Friday sermon.

7th November.—Began Lacordaire's *Conférences de Notre Dame.* He starts with premises open to much discussion, and all his arguments fall to the ground unless one can accept the premises.

Man is a creature to be taught.

There must be a Teacher.

That Teacher must be on earth.

The Church claims to be the Teacher.

The evidence of her authority is her catholicity.

But it seems to me two questions have to be answered before these premises can be accepted.

1. Is the office of the Church primarily that of a Teacher? Is it not rather that of a witness to the Truth delivered to it?

2. Is the Roman Catholic Church *catholic* when she adopts an exclusive sense of the word, and admits no other Church to share her catholicity even upon the basis of Baptism and the Apostles' Creed?

21*st May*, 1869.—Miss Yonge had luncheon here to-day with Alice Moberly. Sir John Coleridge (afterwards Lord Coleridge) and Jane came in the evening. We had not met for twenty years. Jane scarcely looks a day older. They brought Mildred Coleridge with them and Kate Richardson.

1*st July*, 1869 (*Dinner Party*, 1 *Sussex Square*).—Dean Stanley and Lady Augusta, Mr. Browning, Judge Wells, Mr. Vernon Harcourt, Lady Crewe, Miss Crewe, loads of others, twenty at dinner,

others in the evening. Dresses really beautiful, most rich silks, pink, blue, green, richly trimmed, diamonds not many; long trains, nothing extreme in the way of *décolleté-ness*. Mr. Browning took me in to dinner, Dean Stanley the other side. Browning very cordial, pleased to see me, talked of his wife; told me his son never could mention his mother; when obliged to refer to her did so by implication. Young Browning now at Christchurch, Oxford, very English, fond of shooting, which he (the father) hates, goes on very steadily. General conversation very interesting and exciting. Mr. Vernon Harcourt and the Dean told stories of Mr. Bright. They don't like him. Among the anecdotes was one referring to an interview between him and the Prince of Wales. The Prince said, "Mr. Bright, I hear that you think my mother will be the last sovereign of England". Mr. Bright replied, "Your Royal Highness, the people of England are devotedly attached to monarchy. It depends upon the Royal Family themselves whether the attachment will continue." Certainly a courteous warning to the Prince. Talked of the House of Commons and the Trust Bill. The Dean talked low. I could not hear all he said. He struck me as sharper and more self-conscious than when I last saw him. He said little to me at dinner. Browning talked a great deal to me. Lady Augusta after dinner came up and spoke of William's Russian friend whom she knew, and who is nearly well. Lady Augusta very simple and straightforward, talked with me a

great deal afterwards about girls' education, and the new colleges. I gave her my opinion, and told her that girls of her class could only be influenced really by persons of their own standing. The evening very free and pleasant for a dinner party; every one admiring the beautiful rooms. So odd it was to me to be standing on the staircase with Lady Augusta, Dean Stanley and Browning, looking at Jane Coleridge's frescoes. The Dean came up and talked a little to me, but we did not get on very flowingly.

A little music. Mildred Coleridge played small things very nicely. Some one sang. A Mrs. Long wished to be introduced to me, and talking about deaconesses said, would I go and see the institution? They would all be so pleased at my caring about them. Browning almost affectionate when we parted; said he was so glad to have seen me.

23rd July, Paris, Hotel de Londres.—Père Hyacinthe preached at the Madeleine to an enormous congregation, many poor, many of the middle class; the subject, Mary Magdalene, a type of the Church's love. St. John was taken as the type of science, St. Peter of authority; St. John's science was quite a new idea. The sermon had no argument, only great fervour for the Church, and a severe censure on the French, who were called the Pharisees of Christianity, and understanding law only as despotism, and liberty as revolution. There was a musical service before the sermon, and another after. We were in church three hours.

(Père Hyacinthe afterwards joined the Alt-Catholic movement being unable to receive the decree of papal infallibility, promulgated at the Vatican Council. He married, and has since been known as M. Hyacinthe Loyson.)

15*th July*, 1870, *Eisenach*.—I wrote a short letter from Weilburg, which will have told you of our doings up to that time, and I should not have written again till we reached Dresden, only I think you may perhaps be anxious about us now that war is actually declared. We heard the news this morning as we were at breakfast in the *Salle*. Some one (I think it was the master of the hotel) came up and laid before me a printed slip of paper. I had just before been talking about railway trains, and thought this had something to do with them. When I read it you can understand the surprise. We had quite given up the idea. Only yesterday, when we were going over a lovely castle once belonging to the Grand Duke of Hesse-Cassel, but now Prussian, we discussed the war with a party of Germans, and one very intelligent, gentlemanly man said that he had no idea that it would come to anything. Louis Napoleon only wanted to give his people free scope for bluster and talk, he himself did not desire war. My first thought this morning was to return, but the second was to go on. At Cologne we should be in the immediate neighbourhood of the war. At Dresden we are quite out of the way as long as Austria keeps neutral. Should she side with France, we must make our way

to Berlin—a day's journey only from Dresden; and from thence go either to Hamburg or Bremen. If we had money, time and strength, we might find our way to Munich and Innsbruck and so to Zurich, and home through France—but this is far too much of an undertaking. I am very unwilling to break off our tour; the three girls are so enjoying it, and indeed, I like it much myself. Of course, this notion of war has damped us, and one feels that one ought to be even sadder at it than one is. It will bring such terrible sufferings. The spirit of the Germans is completely roused. They feel sure of conquering in the long run.

Wednesday, 21st July, Dresden.—Dresden a strikingly beautiful town. Houses much ornamented, streets handsome, views by the Elbe very pretty. Theatre from 7 P.M. till 10 or 9.30 P.M. We saw *Valentine* by Gustav Freitag, difficult at first to understand, exaggerated acting, much applauded. Fräulein Ulrich, the favourite actress. She cannot ask for a candle without looking over her shoulder scornfully. The hero, Saarfield, a stick with a fierce moustache. The best character, Benjamin Spützbube, Saarfield's servant. One speech excited laughter—a Napoleon is given as a present—the man who takes it (Benjamin) says, "A Napoleon? He is not good for much?" This, I fancy, was an interpolation. The feeling about the war is intense. In this house soldiers are to be quartered. Every *étage* takes so many. In ordinary times soldiers are billeted only on householders, now every one must receive them,

even strangers who are living in rooms they have furnished themselves. This is the case with some English people in Dresden, who have been absent and are obliged to return.

Ten thousand troops are to be billeted in Dresden, chiefly Landwehr, men who have served their time, retired, and are now called up again. First enrolment of the army—young men from twenty to twenty-five—if more are wanted those from thirty to forty are called out; so it goes on. Young men are found better able to bear fatigue, less requiring comforts, no wives and children. Stories were told us of the excellent behaviour of Prussian soldiers in the war between Prussia and Austria in 1866. In this house they even took off their shoes when they went upstairs, not to disturb the ladies.

Wednesday, 10th August, 1870, *Dresden*.—These are wonderful days—telegrams say that the Emperor has fled, and the French have laid down their arms. Before this reaches you the war will seem almost like a dream. We go to Berlin to-morrow. There is one line, rather round-about, by which we can travel certainly, and there is a hope of a more direct line at 5 P.M., so that we may get to Berlin about 10 o'clock. This new turn of the war will make a great difference in the conveyance of men and ammunition to the frontier, so that we may hope to find everything easy. I do trust you will not worry yourself about us. There is not the slightest cause, and it only increases your home worries.

23rd August, Calais.—Very tiresome journey from Antwerp. Rainy day. Lost the train, because of having to go back to the hotel after we had started, for a shawl which had been forgotten. Rush at Lille. Soldiers of the Gardes Mobiles, tipsy, and noisy, going off to the war. No time for much attention at the Douane, so we got off well. Rushed along the line, looking into the carriages for one that might be free—almost all filled with drunken soldiers. At last saw two priests in a carriage, no one else—hurried into it. Priests talked together a little about the war. One of them went only a short way and then got out. Changed again at Häsebruck. Still greater rush. Platform crowded. Nearly dark. We did not know which way to go for the other train. Priest gave us no help; but his back was very broad, and as he pushed on in front I told the three girls to follow in Indian file behind him, so we made our way through the excited crowd to the railway carriages. Priest went with us to a station beyond. Gardes Mobiles went off by another line to Paris. Priests in talking of the war called it a *rude guerre*, said they did not have news, and often suffered *grave inquiétude*. I did not tell them we had come from Berlin. Reached Calais about a quarter to eleven P.M. Comfortable rooms at the hotel.

Wednesday, 24th August, Dover.—We crossed by the very last steamer which was allowed to pass for weeks. We might have been delayed very awk-

wardly. At the moment of departure a difficulty arose. The passport was asked for, just as we were going on board the steamer. Not thinking it would be needed I had given it to Catherine to keep as a remembrance. For a moment I was frightened; I thought she had put it into her trunk. Happily it was in her carriage-bag, and was produced without delay. (That was our last alarm.)

Ashcliff.—It was about this time, or rather before this, that we changed the name of our house from Sea View to Ashcliff. My dear Bella Spencer Smith died on the 3rd of September. On that day we heard of the battle of Sedan, and the surrender of the Emperor Louis Napoleon.

10*th September.*—Heard of the sad loss of the turret ship the *Captain* in the Mediterranean. Captain Cowper Coles on board. I went over the ship before it sailed, it was at Portsmouth. The captain's cabin, prepared for him by his wife, showed such loving and serious thought, with the Scripture texts on the walls. The vessel was grim and oppressive, from the absence of daylight, except just on deck.

15*th August*, 1871, *Ashbourne Green, Derbyshire.*—After short visits at Windsor and New College I came on to my kind friends, Mrs. Blunt and Miss Child. I have been reading *Episodes of an Obscure Life*, and have made up my mind that I know as little of the life of the East End of London, or rather of the lives of the people, as I do of those of the

angels. Write, or think, or work as one may, there are thousands one could never reach, simply because one could not understand them. Perhaps it would be happier, and for some reasons better, if one remembered this more, and took a smaller circle and had special aims. Young girls of the educated class are mine, and I ought to be contented, but then there is such a risk of sitting down satisfied in ignorance, not even praying for those who are suffering.

I was at the Bath Congress in October with Mrs. Bridges. One of the best speeches addressed to working men was by the Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Mackarness). The Bishop of Manchester (Dr. Fraser) was also telling and interesting. Archdeacon Denison began a stormy speech against the bishop, but was stopped by the unanimous feeling of the meeting. The Congress Hall, a large wooden building constructed for the occasion, was the only place of assembly that I went to, but there were other meetings at the rooms. The impression of the whole was satisfactory as regarded a wish for unanimity and mutual concession on the part of the different sections of the Church. Father Benson spoke eloquently and mystically on the deepening of the spiritual life. It seemed easier for all to see what was amiss, than how the evils were to be remedied.

I have published nothing this year but a series of papers in the *Monthly Packet* on "Questions of the Day"—sceptical questions which perhaps young

people may read when they would not undertake anything longer, also a little *Roman History Catechism.*

4th July.—Interview with Mr. William Longman about my *Popular French History.* St. Paul's afterwards, saw Dean Church and Mrs. Church. Academy—"Roll Call," wonderful but not as interesting as Miss Thompson's picture "Missing," which she painted at Ventnor, I think about the time of the Franco-German war.

Sunday, 2nd August, Norfolk Square.—Went to St. Paul's for the afternoon service. Canon Liddon preached on Solomon's character and fall. Tea at Canon Liddon's (Amen Corner). Met Mr. MacColl. Lord Salisbury's children appeared suddenly while we were at tea, having come up from Newhaven for a freak.

August, 1882.—Mrs. Cleveland and I went to New College to a meeting of a few persons interested in schools like St. Boniface. We hope to form a Diocesan Union. The Warden offered all hospitalities, and we had there—the Archdeacon of Northampton (Mr. Thicknesse), Mr. Richards (the Chaplain of St. Michael's, Bognor), Mr. Pennethorne (the Secretary of Holt School, Worthing), Mr. Boyce (the diocesan inspector for Winchester), Mr. Watkins (vicar of Gamlingay), who is acting as a kind of honorary secretary, besides four head mistresses of schools resembling St. Boniface. One of them, Miss Glanville of Uffculme, Devonshire, is connected with a scheme of Canon Brereton's, which would admit

Dissenters as boarders, and so she did not entirely see her way to being one with us; for we want to establish Church Schools (joint boarding and day schools) in small towns, which could not support a High School.

We had a very pleasant gathering, a dinner at New College, with several persons staying in the Warden's house, and a regular business meeting, at which we discussed principles, and found out what each thought; but we did not attempt much beyond.

Since then but little progress has been made, for we have not yet reached our first step of advertising ourselves altogether as Diocesan Schools belonging to a Union; but Mr. Watkins, who manages these matters, hopes to do so soon. In the meantime, St. Boniface has flourished and is flourishing, only we have no end of trouble about a bad investment, made by a lawyer in whom we trusted.

13*th November*, 1882.—I have allowed so many months to go by without note, that I must try by degrees to gather up the scattered memories. The summer holidays come first. I was away only a short time, and did not leave home until the 14th of August. Then I went for one night to Otterbourn. Miss Yonge met me at Dean Bramston's, Winchester. Mr. Boyce, the diocesan inspector, was there, and we discussed the probability of getting Diocesan Schools established, and I think the little meeting may have results. The next day I went to Malvern, to the G.F.S. House of Rest. Mrs. Jerome Mercier

was there. She also is interested in Diocesan Schools, and she took me to Tewkesbury, and we inspected a school which has been established there.

Since then the only important event beyond the daily routine of lessons has been a short visit with Eleanor at Farnham Castle. We went there to be present at a meeting, convened by the bishop, for the purpose of considering the question of schools, like St. Boniface, being established in the diocese. We were there from Saturday to Monday. The weather was wretched and I caught a bad cold, as I pottered about the town on Monday visiting the Deaconess Home for children. Sister Emma was fascinating in her earnest work. The meeting was fairly successful. People seemed interested, and the bishop was most considerate in insisting upon the points which I had previously mentioned to him as being of importance. The clergy, of course, were numerous. Canon Holland came from London and discoursed upon High Schools, and gave us a good deal of information; but unfortunately, it did not really help us, because High Schools are established upon shares, and can afford to pay dividends, whereas Diocesan Schools—if they are to be successful—must be almost entirely founded by subscription, and cannot afford to pay any dividends beyond, perhaps, the interest of £200.

The real pleasure of the Farnham visit was the intercourse with the bishop and his family, including Sir Thomas and Lady Gore Browne (who knew

Henry in New Zealand), and a very pleasant daughter. The tone of life was everything one could desire—simple, refined, definitely religious, services in the chapel, meals in the large hall, great freedom for everyone, and interest in things and people not exclusively ecclesiastical. Through it all, one felt that it was a bishop's household.

22nd May, 1883.—My Oxford visit was interesting, because I was able to be present at a concert, with the Prince of Wales as patron, held in the new schools, and also saw the procession when the memorial stone was placed in the New Indian Institute. Sir Harford and Lady Brydges were staying at New College, and recalled very old days.

Beckley was quiet and resting as usual. London was not resting, it never can be, but it has given me a change and something to think of. I went to the Vaudeville Theatre in the afternoon with Kate Whitehead, and saw Mrs. Stirling and Farren in "The Rivals," and was amused but not fascinated, and every now and then asked myself—Can swearing be allowable? The Grosvenor Gallery, the French pictures, and the Academy were all pleasant in their way, but not striking. London was excited at the opening of "The Fisheries Exhibition," and the world enjoyed itself, I imagine, in the Whitsuntide holidays. I cared most to make the acquaintance of the Duke of Argyll's ideal daughter, Lady Mary Glyn, the wife of the vicar of Kensington. She and her husband dined one day at Colonel Darling's,

where I was staying; no one else was there. I think of her as of a dream of sweetness, grace and goodness, though she is not by any means endowed with brilliant beauty. Mrs. Darling always makes me feel how possible it is to be *in* the world and yet not *of* the world.

20*th February*, 1885.—Yesterday was my seventieth birthday. I meant to have recorded the fact at the time, but the day was fully occupied—seventy? the allotted age of man? It needs only to write the figures to see "how short my time is" May God be with me to the end.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MY LATER BOOKS.

I MUST now return to my own writings. The last but one of my tales, *A Glimpse of the World*, was begun before I went to Pau, and I took it with me and finished it there. It was unquestionably a novel, except that the love affairs do not directly concern the heroine. I fancy, from remarks which were made at the time the book was published, that some persons thought I had rather diverged from the right path in attempting a tale which contained a decidedly sensational marriage incident. They supposed that I always wrote for children, and *A Glimpse of the World* was therefore a disappointment. To myself there was a certain pleasure in writing it, because I put into Myra's character, at the beginning of the story, thoughts and feelings and faults which belonged to my own personal experience. I was not called upon to imagine what she would have felt, or how she would have acted at sixteen. I had only to note down what I should have done or felt myself in her place, and at her age. As regards the marriage incident, it happened that, about the time when I was

writing *A Glimpse of the World*, some circumstances of a similar kind had come to my knowledge, and I was therefore not afraid of exaggerating possibilities.

The details of the foreign tour represent small adventures of my own when travelling, in 1858, with my friend, Julia Cooke, through Germany and a part of the Tyrol known as the Salzkammergut. The Lake of St. Wolfgang, the village, the grand old church, and the château, with its beautiful grounds, which forms a show-place for visitors to Ischl, are all described as I saw them. I stayed myself at the little inn, and made acquaintance with the Irish wife of the Austrian gentleman who owned the château. Most useful they all were for my story. As to the characters, there is nothing particular to say about them, except that I had learnt, during the years which had elapsed since the writing of *Amy Herbert*, to take a wider view of clerical characteristics. I no longer supposed that every clergyman must be perfect, or formed exactly upon the Oxford model. Dr. Kingsbury was not, by any means, my ideal; but I felt that the good points of what might be termed the old school had been overlooked, and I was glad to show that I could sympathise with a tone of mind and a course of action, belonging rather to a former generation than to that from which I had received my own most serious impressions. The book was published after my return to England from Pau.

The most important family event of the years immediately following was the marriage of my brother

Robert's daughter, Emily, to the Rev. Henry Hawtrey, in 1868. William had by this time settled himself at Deutz, on the Rhine, opposite to Cologne, and occupied himself chiefly in a critical study of the Greek of the New Testament. He also wrote two fairy tales, one of which, *Uncle Peter's Fairy Tale*, was full of his natural brightness and power. He was in good spirits, and absolutely contented with his position, but his health was much broken. I paid a short visit to him in 1869, when I travelled with a friend (Caroline Cooke) in Germany and Holland, and visited the Deaconess Institution at Kaiserswerth, and on my return I gave a short account of the deaconess work, which was published in *Macmillan's Magazine*.

I also undertook a new tale which, in accordance with the suggestion of a friend, was intended to show the actual working of certain ideas I had shortly before put forth in a work bearing the title of *Principles of Education*. But even before the tale was published I had nearly come to the conclusion that my day, as regards writing, was over, and afterwards I was confirmed in my misgiving.

Home Life and After Life, my new story, was not exactly a failure, but certainly it was not a success; and yet, on looking at it after a lapse of nearly thirty years, I honestly confess that I think it deserved a more cordial welcome than it received. I know that I gave more thought to it than to any of my other tales, with the exception of *Margaret Percival*, and certainly the plot is worked out more thoroughly than

it is in them. But I made a mistake in bringing it out, which would probably have stood in the way of its popularity, independent of the fact that sensational novels were the fashion of the day.

The form I had chosen was a journal. To describe the look, manners, and tone of voice of the writer, Mrs. Anstruther, was, therefore, out of the question. I put into her mouth the words which I felt I should have uttered myself; I made her act as I thought it likely I should have acted myself; I described her feelings from my own experience; and then, when I presented her to the public my friends said, "What a dreadful caricature of yourself—we can't endure her". I had given the features, but not the expression; the form, but not the spirit of the words. It had never struck me that it was necessary to say, what in fact, writing in the first person, could not be said, "Mrs. Anstruther's words were severe, but her tone and manner were loving" I took it for granted that every one would understand that she was not severe at heart, or rather I never thought about it; and I was scarcely ever more surprised and disappointed than when Mrs. Anstruther was held up to me as an object of aversion by persons who I knew were really fond of me. At one time I thought whether I could rewrite the story, for the cheap edition of my tales. I felt that there was more real interest in the plan, especially in the working out of the consequences of a death-bed promise, than in any other of my tales; but it would have been a fruitless task.

The taste of the day has changed. All I could do, I have done. In an introductory chapter to the last edition I have described Mrs. Anstruther as I imagined her, rather than as the world saw her—a totally different person from myself, and, therefore, not to be compared with me in any way, except as she expressed my thoughts upon certain subjects. Beyond this I could not soften the impression which she had, I found, made. I did not intend to represent her as perfect or infallible, and for that reason I introduced her friend, Mrs. Bradshaw, as a rather sharp though friendly critic. Between the two I hoped the *via media* of educational principles might be reached. Mrs. Anstruther has been considered suspicious and exacting in her treatment of her step-daughter, Ina; and all I can say in excuse of her is, that the persons who make the complaint can never have had to deal with what I must call a slippery character—one which cannot be grasped and held fast. When I wrote *Home Life and After Life* I had had an experience of such a character in more than one instance, and Ina's evasive words, and double motives, and half-obedience, combined with pleasant manners and real good nature, are in spirit taken from life. I have found one person, but only one, beyond my own immediate circle, who could understand the difficulty of dealing with such a character, and could therefore exonerate Mrs. Anstruther from the charge of want of confidence in her step-daughter.

The promise demanded by Colonel Anstruther on

his death-bed was suggested to me by a somewhat similar engagement which had come to my own knowledge. The consequences led me to work out in my story the strong conviction I entertain of the undesirable nature of death-bed wishes. The journey to Pau, with the little adventures in Spain which followed, is in outline a representation of an episode of my life to which I have already referred. The disposition of my much-loved pupil, Louisa Cookson, is exactly portrayed in that of Cecil Anstruther. It was a relief to me to describe my own feelings and experience under a feigned name and with feigned incidents—to make the story, as it were, a cryptogram. But it did not follow that the world would be equally pleased, though I hoped that the plot of the tale, which had nothing to do with myself, would carry on the reader's interest. The sketch of life at Boulogne at the end of *After Life* is, in like manner, a description of a delightful visit which I paid to some English friends with French relatives some years before.

Miss Faulder, and her mother and sister, gave me not only then, but also at other times, the refreshment of a home life with foreign surroundings. Miss Faulder is also intimately associated in my mind with Mrs. Winthrop Praed, the widow of the poet, and worthy of the honour. She lived at Bonchurch for some time, or at least she came there every winter, and we were extremely intimate. It was at her house that I first met Miss Faulder. Mrs. Praed

was always looking forward to the publication of the complete edition of her husband's poems, but the work was not in her hands, and there were many difficulties and delays, and it gave me a feeling of keen regret when she died, shortly before the dearest wish of her heart had been accomplished.

In revising and considerably shortening *Home Life and After Life*, so as to fit it for the cheap edition of my tales, I have left out certain suggestions as to education, which were not especially important, and which rather intruded upon the succession of events. I have come to the conclusion that the young people of the present day leave out reflections and advice in a tale, just as I used to leave out the texts and prayers in Mrs. Sherwood's stories. It is decided that medicine must be medicine, and jam, jam; so that a choice may be made between them. Forty years ago, we all felt it incumbent upon us to take the medicine, and were only too thankful when its flavour could be moderated by the jam. Since the publication of this—my last tale—I have only written occasional papers in magazines, some of which have been collected and published together, such as *Questions of the Day*, a series of papers on the prevailing rationalism; *The Note-book of an Elderly Lady*, and *Letters on Daily Life*; but I am no longer a recognised popular authoress.

The Note-book of an Elderly Lady touches upon the new educational system of examination for girls, and my experience in the working of the system as

connected with St. Boniface School, which by the help of kind friends, I was able to set on foot at Ventnor in the hope that it might be useful to the town. It was begun in 1866, before the University examinations were deemed essential for girls, but I have been obliged to yield to the demands of the day. We have yet to learn the wisdom of the advice insisted upon in the Church Catechism—to "do our duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call us". It almost seems to me as I watch the spirit of the age, that the chief object of some of its energetic women teachers, and workers, is to do their duty in that state of life to which God does *not* call them. But I am old, and perhaps cynical.

The great sorrow of 1872 was dear Robert's death, which was very unexpected and quite broke down his wife's health—she never really recovered from it. That year I went abroad again to meet Mrs. Cleveland in Switzerland. I have never undertaken a foreign journey since, though I have often dreamed of how much I should enjoy it—if only—a great *if*—I had strength to bear the fatigue. I have a craving for beautiful scenery, greater than for music, or art, or literature. It will be satisfied in another world, and with that expectation I am content.

The Franco-German war, and the consequent disturbed state of the Continent, had by this time brought my brother William back to England. He took lodgings at Bonchurch, close to us, in the house since purchased by me, and known as Grey Cliff.

Being near us gave him the feeling of home which he needed. He remained with us until 1874, when his health failed greatly, and wishing, I am sure, to spare us the anxiety of nursing him, he went to his nephew Arthur, who then had a school at Litchford Hall, near Manchester, where he was most tenderly cared for, and there he died on the 14th of November. When Arthur wrote to tell us of our loss, he added: "I was charged to give you each and all one loving message, and say that 'All is love and Christ'". My brother was buried at Blackley, a village in the neighbourhood of Manchester. It is a matter of great, though unwise, regret to me that he was not laid to rest in the lovely churchyard at Bonchurch, where we might have tended his grave with the graves of others dear to him as to us.

I will make but one short comment on the "life which was then brought to an end, as a tale that is told". The peaceful satisfaction of my dear brother in the life he lived at Bonchurch, and the way in which he threw himself into the small interests and hospitalities of a narrow circle, were a proof (if any were needed) of the truth of what he had always said, that the Oxford and Radley social expenditure was not for his own enjoyment. A small cottage, a few books, and a few friends, were all that were required for the full earthly satisfaction of a heart which was enabled by Divine grace to bear misrepresentation silently, and unkind judgment charitably; and in which—though doubtless subject to

much human infirmity—the love of God reigned supreme.

But I must pass on to the few general incidents which remain to be told.

In 1875, Henry with his wife, whose health was shattered, and who had become a most anxious care to her family, came back from New Zealand,[1] and settled near Romford for a time, afterwards removing to Cambridge. This took from us Eleanor, the only one of our large family of nephews and nieces who had been left to live with us, for, of course, her father's claim on her was imperative.

1877 brought the terrible trial of the sudden death of our dearly-loved sister-in-law (Robert's widow), who had never recovered the loss of her husband, and this again had broken down the health of my eldest sister, but we have Eleanor with us again. Her father died in 1879; and her poor invalid step-mother, who lingered for a year longer, went then to live with her sister, Mrs. Elwyn, at Waresley, near Cambridge. Eleanor was thus set free for us, selfishly a comfort inexpressible.

This is our position at present, but a new generation is springing up around us. We live in the future, in the lives of nephews and nieces, and their children, who are the one great interest left us.

My brother Henry was denied the happiness of seeing, before his death, his son Harry, with his wife and two little grandchildren. Harry, who had been

[1] They had gone there in 1852.

in the Indian Civil Service since 1862, and had married ten years after that date, came home in 1879 for a two years' leave; and a week before reaching England his father died. I can never think of it without pain. Henry had such an eager longing to see his grandchildren. The words he spoke years before when he urged us to take charge of his own children, and we hesitated, were strangely fulfilled. "They are more your children than mine," he said, alluding to our love and care for them, and so it has been from the action of events over which we have had no control.

6th January, 1891.—Nearly twelve years since my reminiscences were closed. They have been years of grave import, for they have brought me very near to the great end. The story of the years that are to follow will in all human probability be written by another hand. We have had our especial warning. My youngest sister (Janetta) died last July. She had lived with Edwards at New College for thirty years, and as he said to me when he stood by her dying bed—"she was an unspeakable blessing to him" A life of constant suffering never stood in the way of the duties of hospitality and benevolence. The first break has been made in the band of sisters so singularly united—born after seven brothers, and going through life together as "we four".

Who will be the next called? God only knows, and we need not care to ask, for it must be well with

us. His loving providence has brought us now to a time so free from anxiety that I look around me with thankful wonder at our position; and He will assuredly never forsake us in the future.

We have given up pupils—we are relieved from the necessity of work, and we are able to live at Ashcliff in comfort, with those we love very near us. If I could have foreseen at the beginning of life's struggle the peace which has been granted at its close I might have been a happier, but I should not have been a better woman.

The trial was needed, and I would not have had events otherwise ordered; but none the less do I thankfully recognise the rest that has been granted; and whilst giving my first feelings of gratitude to God—offer my heartfelt acknowledgments to the English and American friends who in the year just past provided us with an addition to our small income by the gift of an annuity.

Many of these friends are very dear to us all. Others there are in America whom I have never seen, but who have most generously striven to make compensation for the loss they felt I sustained by an absence of an international copyright. To one and all I would say that they have been the means of bringing me, after a long and stormy voyage across "the waves of this troublesome world, to a quiet and happy haven," from whence in humble hope and expectation, trusting myself in full confidence to my Saviour, I can gaze upon the green

pastures of Paradise, and see beyond them the glorious city of the redeemed.

10*th July*, 1893.—On the 26th of June in this year, my very dear friend Mrs. Cleveland died sud denly at Parva Domus, her daughter's cottage in New Hampshire (United States).

Thus ends for earth the friendship of nearly forty years. I have written to her once a fortnight regularly, since 1857, except when she has been with us. The blank in life is great—but the time of separation is short—and I think of her as blest and happy in "God's holy keeping" and looking for reunion with her loved ones. Hundreds will lament her loss, for she was one with whom few—if any—could compare.

E. M. S.

CHAPTER XIX.

ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL.

For many years Miss Sewell has dropped out of the ken of the world in general, and of the literary world, which from the forties until the eighties, she enriched with her valuable works. Happy those of us who can look back to the first days of *Amy Herbert, Laneton Parsonage, The Experience of Life*, and other such tales that took the place of Miss Edgeworth's books in drawing-room, and in schoolroom, appealing as they did to the younger generation of that day, and creating a new school of thought in the training of young minds and hearts for this world and the next. These works of Miss Sewell did not deal with the higher ranks of society alone. *Katherine Ashton* and *Ursula* testify to her interest in what we may perhaps be allowed to speak of as socially "middle class".

Her life in the Isle of Wight during her father's lifetime brought her into contact with the tenant farmers and their families, and made her thoughtful and anxious for their better education.

"She was seriously impressed by the utterly insufficient education which children of the middle class received to be of real use to them in after life. Miss Buss's High School in London had drawn public attention to the need of thorough mental and intellectual training, and not superficial teaching for girls. Miss Sewell was another pioneer in the same direction of education which has so marvellously developed in late years; and St. Boniface School, Ventnor, demands very special mention as the outcome of Miss Sewell's anxious consideration in this matter.

"From the early days of this school, Miss Sewell gave me the privilege of her thoughts and plans about it and entrusted me with certain work to do for her in connection with it, and later I had a place in the Council. For these reasons I have been asked to write an account of it.

"St. Boniface has made little or no stir in the world, but from its doors many and many a girl has gone forth, carrying with her a memory of happy days, of good teaching, of friendships to last for ever with fellow-students and head-mistresses and teachers, but over and above all other memories will be that of the foundress of St. Boniface School, the beloved Miss Elizabeth Sewell.

"Miss Sewell was never one to act on impulse, nor, on the other hand, to delay what could be done, with the excuse of 'if things were different' The result was that in due time she had evolved a scheme

for establishing a school for girls of the class we have mentioned.

"Her intention was to educate the elder girls in order that they might teach and train the younger ones in after days. Certain it is that Miss Sewell's influence, through her school, raised and beautified the lives of hundreds of well brought up girls during the years the school lasted. The spirit of true and honest work, the longing for the best they could give, the higher and holier thoughts that were brought to bear on their several characters, sent these girls back to their homes noble and educated women, fitted to face life bravely and cleverly. Miss Sewell's name is a watchword with numbers."

These words, written to me by a friend who saw the school from its first days, are fully confirmed by letters from pupils since Miss Sewell's death, from two of which I will quote.

"I shall never forget the honour and privilege I was given by dear Miss Eleanor Sewell, who allowed me to look once more on the face of her whose voice and words of counsel have been such valuable factors in my life, and whose hand was always doing good as her heart was always feeling for all with whom she came in contact. If only one could follow in her steps at ever so far a distance one will not have lived in vain."

Another writes: "I should like to have been with you all yesterday (the funeral) . . . but it was quite impossible. I have written to my sister and

given her your message. We both of us owe a great deal to our early training at St. Boniface, and we shall always look back with gratitude to the influence that the dear and great lady who has just passed from this world imparted to us then."

Miss Sewell's maxim must have been "despise not the day of small things," for those of us who were privileged to be associated with her in her plans often look back with astonishment and gratitude to that tiny beginning. Four rooms in a little house, at the junction of High Street and West Street in Ventnor, were taken by Miss Sewell on her own responsibility, and a lady who had been trained at Fishponds took possession of them with three resident pupils. This was in 1866. One or two of the townspeople sent their children at once as day pupils, of whom three remained until their education was finished, and they took positions, in private families and in schools, as governesses. One of these three went to the Cape to take the post of head-mistress of a school at Graham's Town, and in other positions carried on educational work for many years in Cape Colony. She is now editor of *The African Monthly*, and in an article or notice of Miss Sewell we have these words which can be only the editor's own :—

". . . In these days of restless activity, there is something refreshing in the contemplation of such a life as that of Miss Sewell. Ninety-one years passed in the island of her birth, and yet hers was no cramped

and narrow conception of life. Wide reading and intense sympathy, added to frequent intercourse with cultured minds, proved in her case a valuable substitute for worldly experience. Her books belong essentially to her own time, the conditions of social and intellectual life are so different now, that few if any of her stories would find readers to-day, but the influence of such a life as hers is the heritage of future generations."

Miss Sewell visited the little school constantly, took friends to see it, and was thankful that her wishes had been so far blest.

It was not long before the school became so popular that it outgrew the house, and was removed to 7 St. Boniface Terrace, and when numbers still increased and part of the next house had to be engaged also, Miss Sewell saw that she must face the responsibility of building. Before we go further it will be well to point out that Miss Sewell was at this time no idle woman. Besides family ties and anxieties and a large correspondence, she was engaged in writing, and received pupils into her own house. But nothing daunted by the undertaking, with the help of her sister Ellen, she planned the schoolhouse, employed a local builder, found the money, and in the space of about a year the building was ready for occupation.

A generous friend of Miss Sewell's advanced money for furnishing, and many friends and people she interested in the scheme of the school became

subscribers. Her plan was to ask for annual subscriptions of five shillings and upwards for a limited time, to be renewed if they were willing, to pay off the loan or to buy new furniture as it was needed. The house could accommodate twenty-two to twenty-four pupils, and three or four mistresses, including the headmistress. By this time the school had assumed such proportions as to make the foundress feel that she would be wise to enlist the interest and support of others in carrying on its management. So she formed a council, after consulting the vicar of Holy Trinity Parish, the Rev. Arthur L. B. Peile, now Master of the Royal Collegiate Chapel of St. Katharine, Regent's Park, and appointed him the President. The members of the council, both ladies and gentlemen, were personal friends of Miss Sewell, not in Bonchurch and Ventnor only, but in other parts of the island, so that the knowledge of St. Boniface School might spread.

A prospectus was drawn up with the names of the council and of the Bishop (Harold Browne) of Winchester who had kindly consented to be "Visitor," and the title of Diocesan was added, and the school was called St. Boniface Diocesan School.

The religious teaching had from the first been, and was always to be, strictly Church of England, a conscience clause being allowed for day pupils. Arrangements were made for an examination in religious knowledge, by the Diocesan Society for the Religious Instruction of Intermediate Schools, instituted by

Bishop Wilberforce. The Rev. Edward Boyce, rector of Houghton, was the secretary.

The terms were fixed at a low rate, thirty guineas a year for boarders, for board and instruction. Low as these terms appeared to be there were yet many who were desirous to send their girls to St. Boniface, but were unable to pay the whole fees and extras for French, Latin, and music. Miss Sewell therefore considered what could be done to help them, and asked for subscriptions, when the furniture was paid for, to form a fund to supply the deficiency in the parents' fees. It was called "The Exhibition Fund," and in later years, when Miss Sewell had retired from the Council, it was called "The Sewell Exhibition Fund," and she reserved to herself the distribution of it.

For many years Miss Sewell was to be seen walking to the school once a week or oftener to give a lesson in history or to say a word of encouragement or reproof. And during the preparation for Confirmation she made a point of private talks with every candidate. How precious those words and their tender sympathy were, can well be imagined; and as we think of the hundreds of St. Boniface girls who have gone into all parts of England, her colonies and her dependencies, we must hope and believe that the spirit and influence of those interviews have been carried as good seed and borne fruit unto eternal life.

Since these words were written, Miss Eleanor

Sewell has put into my hands a letter from an early pupil of St. Boniface which so realises the hope that I had expressed that I feel it should be published.

"North Adelaide,
"*October*, 1906.

"My dear Miss Sewell,

"I have just seen by the *Gentlewoman*, that my dear friend Miss Elizabeth Sewell has passed to her rest. It was a wonderful age to have reached, and I trust that the last days of peace were unclouded by suffering. What a grand life it has been, an ideal for one to look up to. She was a 'Rock of Faith' to me from the first moment I knew her, and twice during the past twenty-five years, once when I was very ill, and very lonely in London, and once when my faith was shaken to breaking point by sudden troubles, did she by her wise counsel and letters keep me 'steadfast in the Faith,' and turned my eyes to look for, to quote her own words, 'the Peace of God which passeth all understanding'.

"If there is anything in my life that has helped others, if I am able to teach my children anything of 'true religion,' I got it first from her. The thought of her is a strength which will go with me to the end of my life. . . . I hope you will not mind my asking for some friend to send me word about the last day, and if she is laid in the beautiful Undercliff cemetery, within sound of the sea. I know it well. She unlocked the gate and took me through;

a beautiful spot in the daily walk of school life, when all the scenery was lovely.

"I must not trespass on your time, but I know you will understand that I was bound to add my tribute to the grand life-work of one whom all must admit it was a privilege to know. With much love and sympathy, believe me to be,

"Yours affectionately,

"M. H."

Another very important feature of Miss Sewell's solicitude for the pupils was the way in which she made herself acquainted with their family circumstances, and, when they were leaving school, with their probable future. She spared no pains or trouble in discussions with the head-mistress, in interviews with the girls themselves, and in correspondence for them, so that she might, if possible, ensure that they were placed in the positions for which they were best suited for making their way in the world.

It was a source of considerable disappointment, that the class for whom the school was especially established valued its advantages less than was anticipated and hoped for. But many clergymen and professional men were thankful to find in St. Boniface an excellent education for their daughters at its moderate charges. As years went on and we had to move with the times, the girls were prepared for the Oxford local examinations and for Trinity College and the Royal Academy

of Music; and the list of "Passes" and "Honours" is no inconsiderable one.

Some days at St. Boniface stand out pre-eminently before me. One when Bishop Harold Browne came, and was shown over the school, and afterwards stood in the school-room and spoke to us all, especially the children, words of earnest and fatherly counsel. Then there were the prize-days in connection with the Diocesan Society for Religious Education. The preparations, the excitement and enthusiasm of every one until the supreme moment, when all the visitors had arrived and been seated, and all eyes were turned to the door to watch for the entrance of the foundress! A thrill ran through the school as she entered, and all rose to their feet until she had taken her seat, after bowing to all assembled and speaking her ever bright and loving greeting to her loyal mistresses, and to the children. Mr. Boyce followed with the certificates and the prizes of Bible and Prayer-book, handsomely bound, with the arms of the diocese stamped in gold outside, and the bishop's signature written inside.

The day before the break-up for the summer holidays, when the prizes for the year's work were presented, Miss Sewell would go to see the prize list and write the names in all the books, a work of considerable fatigue in the palmy days of St. Boniface, when the register showed more than sixty pupils.

But to return to the more matter of fact history of Miss Sewell's school. It went through many vicissitudes in the early days, both financial and otherwise.

But Miss Sewell was always hopeful and full of resource, and, when many a year's end saw us with barely two pounds in hand, she always said to me: "Well, my dear, if we shut up to-morrow the sale of the furniture would pay our debts, and I should be always glad that I had started the school".

Then for some years St. Boniface was a great success, numerically and financially. A sister of the head-mistress of that time came to Ventnor and opened a boarding-house for day pupils, and added by this means greatly to its popularity. But about the year 1866 there was a turn in the tide. High schools were being rapidly established all over the country. Winchester had not, as yet, opened one, but, being anxious to do so, consulted Miss Sewell on the subject, and from the day that it was established St. Boniface began to decline in numbers. Great efforts were made to draw in more pupils and to awaken fresh interest by enlarging the borders of the council. Alterations were made in the teaching staff, their number was reduced, though it was felt to be a somewhat dangerous experiment for the efficiency of the school.

From the first placing of the school on the basis of a council, Miss Sewell most kindly insisted that her council should feel no financial responsibility; and so when things grew worse it was she who suffered by taking lower rent for the house. If the school were given up entirely, the building being fit for a school only, it would be a dead loss to Miss

Sewell, and that could not be allowed; besides, if any enterprising person should wish to take it for such a purpose, she would let it only on condition of its being a Church school. It was the falling off of the boarders that made so much reduction in its income; the numbers of the town children kept up fairly.

Well, St. Boniface was not given up then, and in 1889, when a new Vicar of Holy Trinity Parish entailed a new president of the council, the Rev. Arthur P. Clayton, he took a different view from that which Miss Sewell had so kindly wished the council to take, and he pointed out to them that they had legally financial responsibilities, and must every one take his share of the liabilities, which they immediately did, Miss Sewell and her niece among the rest.

When again it seemed inevitable that the school must be closed, the same president inspired fresh energy by positively declining to assent to such a motion, saying, "that it was of vital importance to the whole town of Ventnor that a Church school such as St. Boniface should not be given up without another effort," and he carried the council with him.

It was after the first of the two crises just mentioned, that Miss Sewell, whose strength was failing from advancing years, withdrew from the council, but consented to take the position of visitor, which since the death of Bishop Harold Browne had remained vacant. At the same time she sold the house to the president and two other gentlemen of

the council, and from that time the school was carried on in a great measure independently of Miss Sewell; but she never failed to accept the invitation to be present on the break-up day, and to present the prizes, until her strength entirely failed her, and then she asked leave to depute her niece to act for her, and by her she sent words of sweetest greeting and love to all assembled, more especially to her St. Boniface children. Her last letter on such an occasion will fittingly finish this sketch of the story of St. Boniface as Miss Sewell's school:—

"My Dear Children,

"Old age prevents me from being with you to-day; I could not bear the fatigue, but I have been asked to give you a motto for the year, and I have chosen—Onward! Forward! Upward!

"Onward! never to stand still and think you have learned enough or done enough. Forward! to make each day a decided step in advance, being more diligent, more careful, and, above all, more constant in your remembrance that God's eye is upon you, that you are working for Him. Upward! looking up to God in all you do and asking Him for His blessing, His guidance, and cheered by the blessed hope of His eternal reward.

"May He in His mercy grant it to us all. This is the earnest prayer of your affectionate old friend,

"Elizabeth M. Sewell.

"Ashcliff, 27*th July*, 1898."

In looking through some of Miss Sewell's correspondence, there were found letters to clergymen who had asked her opinion on middle-class education, and to others describing a scheme in the Winchester Diocese in 1889, on which she was especially consulted, and which she assisted, by visits to the bishop at Farnham Castle, to Ringwood and Godalming, for the purpose of talking with those interested, and giving them her experience. She was very desirous to have schools such as St. Boniface established over the country, and called St. Boniface Schools. "I believe," she said, "very much in a name."

Her foresight and prophetic spirit are shown by the following passage in one letter :—

"What I earnestly desire to see established, is a training school for upper-class mistresses, on the same system as those for the National School, only a little enlarged. I believe myself that this would reach the need of the middle class more than anything else. Provide good mistresses and good schools must follow. If Government would offer to all schools placed under such upper-class mistresses (of course supposing them to be first provided) I believe they would find good schools for the middle classes spring up all over the country, and the young girls who now slave as nursery governesses, because they are above taking the position of National School mistresses, would I believe willingly accept the training of these upper schools. But this is a dream.

I am only doing my very little to work out this idea under disadvantageous circumstances. I may not be able to carry it out myself, but I am anxious to spread the principle, because in these days nothing is done except from a conviction of practical results. Two or three successful schools, founded and carried on upon the system I have described, will be better than the most eloquent words of the wisest of living men—by better, I mean more convincing."

Again in another letter :—

"If Tetbury and Tewkesbury could be called Diocesan Schools, the same system would be begun, which we hope to carry out in the Winchester Diocese, and, if begun, it would spread. The schools need not all be on one plan ; some would be for a higher, some for a lower grade of children ; but the same principles of careful religious training and public supervision would be maintained in all, and then we might hope to secure the young generation from the terrible evils of rationalism and a low moral tone which are threatening them. I speak only of girls, my business lies with them, and they are the class left mostly without satisfactory education. The State is making rapid strides in its efforts and threatens to grasp the whole of the lower middle class in its secular arms, and alas ! for England when it shall have succeeded, as assuredly it will succeed, if we do not each of us in our small way do the work which lies before us to prevent it, by forestalling it. I have written my mind

freely; you can make any use of my letter that you like.

"Always affectionately yours,

"ELIZABETH M. SEWELL.

How prophetic these words were, the events of the past year (1906) sufficiently prove.

H. J. H.

CHAPTER XX.

LITERARY AND PERSONAL INFLUENCE.

A TEACHER, a teacher of girls! This was the title, the sphere, the power which Miss Elizabeth Sewell realised and claimed as her own, and to which throughout her life she devoted her unusual gifts. Gifts of intellect and spiritual insight which made her no ordinary instructress, but (I am quoting from a letter received this day from Miss Soulsby) "one of those great teachers who influence so widely and so deeply, that their ideas change the outlook of the next generation, and this to such an extent that they themselves are sooner forgotten than smaller people who press some special point which continues to stand out as a memorial to its inventor".

Miss Sewell's teaching voice and pen have been silent for many years, but it is by this standard that the influence of her life-work must be measured. Her books, even the very early *Amy Herbert* and *Laneton Parsonage* series, were never intended for amusement, they are distinctly didactic in tone and intended to illustrate the truths of the Christian faith as practised in English homes.

The notices in the daily and weekly papers of

August, 1906, in their comments on the literary work of Miss Sewell missed the point of this single object of her work. Though many of her stories were written for pecuniary profit (which was at one period considerable), each had its own definite point of instruction in some part of the faith and practice of the English Church. This sets aside the often repeated comparison with the stories of Miss C. M. Yonge whose popularity lasted on into another generation of girl readers. Miss Yonge aimed at the "harmless novel" and innocent amusement with an equally religious tone and the same school of thought. And Miss Yonge's stories, as such, are no doubt more interesting and amusing in plot and character, though personally Miss Sewell had a far keener sense of humour than her contemporary writer.

In the early Victorian period, when these tales were published, parents began to realise that Mrs. Sherwood and Mrs. Cameron were hardly suitable reading for girls who had once gone through their course of Fairchild and Henry Milner. The Oxford Tracts had roused many to think what had better be taught their children about the Church, and they thankfully turned to the tales of Miss Sewell. *Laneton Parsonage* seems to have been particularly useful in reference to baptismal doctrine. I am allowed to use the words of the Rev. J. J. Lias, Chancellor of Llandaff Cathedral, who in 1889 wrote to Miss Sewell, sending to her a book of his own authorship. He writes:—

"I am sending this book in recognition of invaluable help rendered by you to me nearly half a century ago. The recognition is somewhat tardy and altogether inadequate, yet I did not feel justified in intruding on your leisure without something in the nature of an introduction. When I first fell in with *Laneton Parsonage* I was in a stage of sentimental evangelicalism in which the reading of good works and thinking of (perhaps) good thoughts was to me the whole of religion. When my tutor gave me *Laneton Parsonage*, its doctrine of baptismal grace and privileges at once inspired me, and the desire to offer every daily thought, word, and deed to God has, I trust, never left me. I never became an advanced High Churchman, but my sympathies have been with the common-sense practical Churchmanship you have taught in your books—a Catholic Christianity which holds fast the Word of God and the Creeds, and honours the Sacraments. Allow me at the beginning of this New Year to wish you every happiness; if it be any addition to that happiness to know that you are sincerely loved and respected and have been so for the last half century by many who have never had the privilege of seeing your face, allow me to assure you that this is, and has been, the case.

"I remain, dear Madam,

"Yours gratefully,

"J. J. Lias."

This same gentleman, writing to Miss Eleanor Sewell in 1906, says: "I do not know what book of mine I sent your aunt, but I have written a good many, and those written for the Cambridge Bible for Schools have had a wide circulation. Also as Professor at Lampeter and Vicar of St. Edwards, Cambridge, I had an opportunity of influencing many lives, so there is no knowing how far the influence may have gone. I am now past three score and ten, but the sober, steady, strong Church teaching of your aunt has been ever of use to me."

Margaret Percival was designed for older girls and was somewhat alarming to the extreme evangelical. The definite Anglican teaching of Uncle Sutherland, which now appears so very mild and of everyday practice, was regarded with suspicion of "Popery" by those brought up in the school of Simeon and Venn. How much these simple lessons have had to do with bringing the life of the children of the Church of our land more into line with her Prayer-book doctrine we cannot say, but they must count (as also the novel of *Hawkstone*, by Dr. W. Sewell) as a very sound, useful and remarkable part of the Anglican revival.

Experience of Life stands on a much higher literary level, and appeals to all thoughtful readers. Few characters can be more vigorous than that of Aunt Sarah, few pictures of English middle-class provincial life more delicately drawn. The book in this way ranks with *Cranford*, and its delightful English

places it almost on a par with the daintily painted miniatures of Miss Austen. Mrs. Vaughan, one of Miss Sewell's devoted American admirers, writes: "Miss Sarah Mortimer has helped me in many a hard place". Of course! for she spoke the words of wisdom which her originator gave to her "children," as those who were taught at Ashcliff delighted to call themselves. Truly a large and wide-spreading family!

The many school books published by Miss Sewell, Histories and French and Italian Readers, hardly need notice here. They have had their use but are out of date now. Of the Italian history, Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff wrote to the authoress thanking her for her intelligent grasp and clear account of the modern history of Italy, in whose politics Miss Elizabeth Sewell took a most keen interest.

In relation to the Ashcliff Educational Plan, contrasted with the High School Scheme, it may be interesting to insert this letter from Miss Soulsby to Miss Sewell, written in 1888:—

"18*th February*, 1888,
"The High School, Oxford.

"Dear Madam,

"Will you allow me as a High School mistress to thank you for your very suggestive paper. I myself was brought up on your books, and owe you a large personal debt of gratitude for the 'Greece' and 'Rome' and 'Egypt' which are prominent among

my earliest recollections: and although I am now engaged in a branch of educational work which is supposed to run counter to yours, yet I entered it with a firm hope, which I still hold, that in course of time the modern system may sway back to a more womanly education. Such papers as yours (though not practical as a working scheme—I conclude that you did not mean it for that) are so helpful in keeping our deficiencies before us. I wish you would write a paper on what perplexes me more than anything else in woman's modern education—what good comes of it at last?

"Putting aside the exceptional few who thirst for student life, why should the ordinary girl lose nerves and temper and home graces in order to bring herself to the level of a clever undergraduate. They say that she must do it in order to teach. But I never see it pointed out that this is creating a fictitious demand—which it surely is—if she teaches what her pupil only needs in order to hand on when her time or teaching comes. Why not agree to divert the energy of both teachers and taught to subjects which are, in themselves, useful to women?

"With apologies for the liberty I have taken in thanking you,

"Believe me,

"Yours faithfully,

"LUCY H. M. SOULSBY."

The devotional books, *Passing Thoughts*, *Thoughts*

for the Age, Thoughts for Lent, etc., are only known to those who have used them continually, as expressing most clearly the mind of the writer on the subject which she loved best. Amid so many new manuals, I have never found any on the Holy Communion as useful as her *Preparations;* it has all the sound doctrine of Hooker and the Caroline Divines, and avoids those somewhat grotesque expressions which are too common. The little book on the Holy Week is full of reverent suggestions for that week of self-communing.

This letter from Miss Wordsworth is of interest:—

"Lincoln, *15th December*, 1906.

"You ask me to contribute any reminiscences of Miss Elizabeth Sewell, but I fear, beyond a general recollection of the brightness and sympathy which marked her intercourse, there is little I could chronicle. We very rarely met, though I heard a great deal of her through others—notably my sister-in-law who spoke of 'Aunt Elizabeth' as one of those, perhaps the one more than all others except her parents, to whom she had been indebted for the religious influences which guided her life. There must have been many others who could say the same, and I think *Laneton Parsonage* was the book which produces the greatest impression in these ways.

"Were I, however, asked to name my favourite I should without hesitation name *Experience of Life*. In it I think the author achieved her greatest suc-

cesses in character painting, and made Miss Sarah Mortimer a vivid personal reality to many among us. The shrewd old lady's sayings often even now recur to one's mind—and there is a pleasure in these bustling days in sitting even in imagination in her quiet old-fashioned parlour listening to Miss Cole's tranquil reading of the *Spectator*. How deliciously soothing it must have been! or in stealing out of doors and surreptitiously pinching the leaves of Molly's and Betty's lemon plants! and did ever any coffee taste so good as that which charmed away Sarah's nervous headache after an evening of misery? It is also very interesting to have a glimpse of good old-fashioned Church people like Lady Emily Rivers. In that way the book has almost an historical value.

"We are all apt to forget how much good there was in England before 'Tractarianism' had become a potent influence in the Church. There is one little book I should like to name, though it is in part at least a compilation—*Preparation for the Holy Communion* by the author of *Amy Herbert*. It was given me years ago, and I have found it very helpful. There is an earnestness and sobriety, I might say 'good sense' in its tone, which makes it very suitable for many who would shrink from making use of the less restrained phraseology of more modern manuals. I should say this sense of balance and proportion was one of the leading characteristics of the writer and made her books and her influence so specially

valuable to young girls. It was the best possible antidote to vulgarity, self-assertion, and love of sensation. If she did not find them Christian gentlewomen she made them so. Would her influence might last! and it will directly or indirectly through many coming generations.

"Yours etc.,

"E. WORDSWORTH."

Rather later she issued, in the *Churchman's Magazine*, a most useful paper on "The Influence of Rationalism on the Minds of Women" We hardly hear of rationalism in the early twentieth century when socialism and theosophy are to the front, but it was a very lively danger in the early days of Higher Female Education; and Miss Sewell was much consulted by women whose faith had lost grip. She wrote in reference to this very striking paper: "There are thoughts in it I would like to put into your heart as well as your head, for they are the result of experience".

In addition to her published works Miss Sewell was an accomplished and indefatigable letter writer. In correspondence with intimate friends, she had a habit of beginning a letter and laying it aside to be resumed as time allowed—and her letters, as her conversations, are marked by her happy way of inviting interest in her own affairs as well as giving it to others. During many years in the Australian Bush these delightful letters came to me at very

regular intervals, and always brought that sense of self-respect which her friendship gave to those much younger than herself. One missed them terribly during the last years of her life.

I think I had read all her books when at the age of fifteen (and straight from Frome Selwood where the "Bennett Case" was bringing the holiest things into ordinary and angry discussion, and surrounding religion with sharp jars in many homes) I was drifted under her influence. I say drifted, for there was no link of formal pupilage or family tie. But from that time, until the cloud fell on her memory in 1896, I knew what it was to have a teacher and a friend. With no claim whatever but that of a girl who read, thought, and was thoroughly unsatisfied with faith and practice, she taught me all I have known of the way of the Church. The strength of the teaching lay in her own complete mastery of what she taught and its being a living thing in her practice. Can those of us, who went through those courses of instruction on Butler's *Analogy* and Wordsworth's *Theophilus Anglicanus*, ever cease to be thankful for them, or ever look at one of those classics without thought of the tiny hand (with its gold pencil always ready) turning the leaves of book and note-book, the clear voice, reading and questioning, the bright smile at a thoughtful though wrong reply, and the crushing reproof of anything like *inattention*. The logic and Italian lessons were of course less memorable, because the centre of her life and thought was religion, and

only when dealing with this subject was she quite at her best.

Nor was all the teaching given in lesson hours. There were some years when, through lack of the same privileges at Bonchurch, the Ashcliff party attended the daily and yearly services at Holy Trinity, Ventnor. Provided by the late Dr. Leeson with keys of his estate, the steep road and the hundred steps were avoidable, and the walk through the lovely Undercliff gardens gave not only chances of private talk, but of personal help.

And here the teacher taught again, with that God-given tact which can never be learned.

Nor, though respecting the feelings of the most deficient, did she hesitate to give an honest opinion if it was sought. The then Vicar of Holy Trinity once said, "You know, Miss Sewell, I always feel nervous when preaching before you"; at once came the prompt reply · "Well, Mr. Peile, I think you *do* sometimes strain the types of the Old Testament, but I am always happy when you give out a text from the New".

It was my privilege and honour in 1865-66 to be able to do the drudgery of some press corrections and index marking which had fallen to her already busy life, and afterwards to write the *Catechism of English History* which was the first of a series brought out by her. The hours spent in this service gave me a method in work and a sense of moral duty in performing it, which have stood me in good stead during

a strenuous life. Miss Sewell would read rapidly through the parts prepared for her, and as rapidly, if possible, stop, and balance a sentence, being as particular of the truthful colour given to even insignificant personages as if fearful of a prosecution for libel. Few women have had such a sense of justice, and very few have developed intellect so much in advance of emotion. Nor was it those only who had the delight of being often with her who were impressed by the teaching faculty. Among many casual instances is that of a girl who was detained at the foot of the Lollard's Tower, Lambeth, and showing her impatience of delay, was addressed by a little lady, who was also waiting her turn with a party, and asked to spend the time in learning more about the Lollards and the locality. The girl afterwards saw the lady's name in the visitors' book, was led to read her works and learnt for life the love of study, though she never met Miss Sewell again.

Miss Sewell had, in a degree I have never found in any other person, the gift of strong sympathy. She really put herself in the place of the one needing advice, and with this there was never mingled a grain of patronage. How many of us, now able to comprehend the pressure on her time, thoughts, mind, and the many serious family anxieties which constantly beset her, almost reproach ourselves for claiming her interest in our less important affairs!

Among some tributes from old pupils we may quote a few: "I can never forget all I owe to her and how

she made one feel that the Will of God was the only thing that really mattered ".

Another · " Looking backward I can see so plainly that it is only through what one learnt at Ashcliff that I have struggled through my life as far as this—there seems a great gap in the world to-day ".

Again : " She first taught me the beauty of religion, and her simple words that ' Our Lord was her best Friend,' lived out day by day with such splendid courage, love, and sympathy for others, will never be forgotten by me ".

One of her few desires for herself was to outlive her sisters that she might as far as possible save them by keeping the burden of business on her own shoulders. " I want," she once wrote, as of a fault, " to be a Providence to those I love." The desire was fulfilled, beyond probably its own intention.

Miss Sewell's best loved and never exhausted book of Devotions was the Book of Psalms, and of those the 119th Psalm in particular. The impress of her personality survives in the words for those who have heard her repeat them, and it was with a thrill of fulfilment that it was found that out of that Psalm our dearest and holiest friend had selected for her grave-stone the simple sentence: " I am Thine, O save me ".

If there is a revival of interest in the *Amy Herbert* series of tales, it will be from those who are interested in the domestic history of the years of the Anglican Revival. It is hardly to be expected that they

would suit the taste of the educated girl of the twentieth century, and they were not intended for the uneducated. But in the many homes where Ashcliff pupils are now elderly mothers, or workers for the children of other people, or living quiet lives of study and contemplation, or engaged in literary work, or leaders in society, or even far away in Colonial and American homes, the sound doctrines learnt from Miss Sewell are surely spreading, and the voice and words of the teacher come back at critical and puzzling moments of hesitation amid the problems of life.

To have been one of "Aunt Elizabeth's Children" is a blessing some of us who are grandparents have not outgrown, and her small dainty personality with the intense refinement and courtesy of manner and frequent bright flashes of humour we treasure in our memory, while the Ashcliff teaching is for daily practice, and the renewal of intercourse will come where, as Canon Liddon writes :—

"The most experienced teacher will greatly rejoice in beginning a new education in the immediate Presence of the Great Master".

I. B. C.

CHAPTER XXI.

LATER DAYS.

MISS SEWELL'S arduous life-work came to an end as she has told in her own words in 1890, and from that year to 1897 she kept up many outside activities, visiting St. Boniface School, attending committees there, visiting the village school, keenly interested in events of the day, reading the *Times* aloud in the evening or some book of note.

She was working at her *Outlines of Italian History* and paid various visits to London and New College. She took up various pursuits, for which her busy life had left little time to indulge her taste, and I have before me two books of most delicately drawn sketches in sepia showing ability of no mean order, especially noticeable for what artists call "values," which she finished during these years, all bearing the marks of great accuracy and truth of detail.

Her sympathy was always ready for her friends at their need, so strong, so understanding and withal so tender, that it held untold comfort in its depths.

So life went on until the last shock of the sudden death of her sister Emma in 1897 broke down that

faithful heart, which had borne so many shocks and sorrows in undaunted trust and endurance; after that her brain became gradually clouded, shown first in lapses of memory as to trivial things and weariness which craved more and more for sleep. It was very wonderful during that time how if a religious subject were started she would enter into it for a while with all her old keen interest. But the weariness increased, and when the last two deaths came, that of her brother the Warden of New College in 1903, and of her sister Ellen, the inseparable sharer of her work, her joys and sorrows for over ninety years, she did not know that her unselfish prayer, the great desire of her heart, "that if it were God's will she might go last," had been granted to her.

One thing indeed was most noticeable in those long months of weakness and weariness passed mostly in sleep that preceded the end; the habits of a lifetime of self-control and discipline held complete sway. Her patience, gentleness, and courtesy never failed, there was generally the attempted response to any caress, the murmured thanks, the assurance to the anxious watchers that she was "quite comfortable and had all she wanted"; pathetic enough to the hearers at the thought of the limitations of that dear life ebbing away, which had been so richly endowed itself and had been the means of such untold blessing to others.

None could tell what passed in the mind we loved during that time, when we must believe she was

being prepared for that rest to which she was called on Friday, 17th August, 1906. That knowledge lies in the deep mysteries of God.

C. M. W.

Now that she has passed beyond the veil, we who are left and can look back through a great part of her long life must be struck with two special points—the first, the extraordinary changes which in the course of her life she witnessed; and the second, the unchangeableness of the principles which she held and taught. Those changes, not only in increased knowledge, scientific and mechanical, "as the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns," but also in politics and religion, were keenly noted and weighed by her, not without many misgivings in regard to the latter. It is certain that a mind so active and logical as hers widened in many respects, but she never ceased to hold to the great principles on which her life was founded; and those principles, which in her books and her conversation she always taught to the blessing of her readers and hearers, live on, and we trust will live on, to the blessing of generations yet unborn. "She hath done what she could."

A fitting requiem may be found in these words of hers: "There is a peace which passeth understanding. Sunday after Sunday the prayer is offered that it may be granted us. If, in the boundless mercy of God, it should ever be bestowed upon us, we shall

need no deeper rest on earth, for we shall have had a foretaste of the unspeakable rest of Heaven," to which God in His boundless mercy has brought her, for "the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God"

H. A. F.

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